The social effects of the closure of village schools in Northumberland

Bell, David Massie

THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE CLOSURE OF VILLAGE SCHOOLS IN NORTHUMBERLAND

A thesis submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts (Ed.) of the University of Durham

by

DAVID MASSIE BELL, B.A., M.A.(Ed.) Dip. Ed.

JANUARY 1983

THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE CLOSURE OF VILLAGE SCHOOLS IN NORTHUMBERLAND

A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts (Ed.)
of the University of Durham - by
DAVID MASSIE BELL, B.A.,M.A.(Ed.),Dip Ed.

ABSTRACT

The closure of village schools is currently a matter of concern. Since 1945 almost two thousand of these schools have been closed in England and Wales. It seems likely that more will do so.

It has been suggested that when its school closes a village 'dies'. Young people no longer want to live there, other services deteriorate and the community suffers. Evidence to support these statements is minimal.

This study is concerned with the relationship between the village and its school. It traces the evolution of rural education and explores the concept of Community in a rural setting. The circumstances of village schools since 1945 are investigated in a national context, and in relation to the political philosophy of the sparsely populated region of Scandinavia.

A study of a number of villages in Northumberland is included, with an analysis of the views of inhabitants on the contribution of the school to their social life. Over one hundred village schools have been closed in Northumberland since the second world war, and the focus of the investigation is upon a sample of related communities in the county which have retained and lost their educational presence.

The study is divided into 5 chapters. The general pattern of chapters consists of an introduction, exposée, case study and conclusion.

The results of the investigation, together with recommendations, are appended.

January 1983

THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE CLOSURE OF VILLAGE SCHOOLS IN NORTHUMBERLAND

CONTENTS

APPENDICES

MAPS

FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Michael McPartland who has supervised this work for three years, and to my wife Doreen who has lived with it for rather longer.

INTRODUCTION

Northumberland is essentially a rural county. The predominant settlement pattern is based on the village. Traditionally the social life of these villages has centred on the church and the school.

Since the second world war over one hundred village schools have been closed by Northumberland Local Education Authority. This has led to concern amongst many country dwellers. They see young parents as being discouraged from settling in rural communities, and they interpret the decline in public services like transport and the post office as complementary and calamatous spin-offs. Community spirit, and the activities to which this gives impetus, is considered to be threatened. When a school is closed, it is felt, the heart goes out of a village.

In fact this notion has not been tested in the County. Yet with so many redundant schools, it can be seen as a fruitful field for investigation.

That is the purpose of this study. It sets out to determine the social effects of the closure of village schools in Northumberland. The opening chapters are devoted to an historical, social and theoretical examination of the rural school and community. Later chapters examine legislative, philosophical and administrative attitudes to the village school since 1945.

The final chapter is devoted to a description and analysis of field work carried out in a number of Northumbrian villages.

Throughout, the underlying query remains: is the closure of a village school a calamity or a catalyst?

CHAPTER 1

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

1.1 Introduction

The viability of village schools in the 1980's is in question. Their function is being measured against educational, economic and social criteria. In particular, their role in an evolving rural milieu is being examined critically.

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the development of English village schools in historical terms, with particular reference to the rural community which they have traditionally served.

The 16th century has been selected as a starting point, while 19th and 20th century developments are reflected mainly through a case study of one Northumbrian school.

1.2 The Village School in the 16th and 17th Centuries

England was throughout this period essentially an agricultural country.[1] The daily existence of the vast majority of people, however they made their living, was dominated by the land and the seasons. English society was still made up of small local communities - villages, hamlets, and miniature market towns - with London the only big urban centre. Villages varied in size and type. In more populated areas they were relatively close together and each might form a separate parish; in the sparser regions such as Northumberland, parishes were large and might contain a number of villages and hamlets cut off from one another by miles of rough, empty countryside. The distances that separated them had to be travelled on foot or horseback, and the roads were bad and likely to disappear in winter.

[1] LASLETT, Peter. The World we have Lost. London 1965. Chapters 1 & 2.

A village of moderate size might consist of some forty or fifty households, say 200 to 300 inhabitants. These fell into a number of socio-economic groupings, though the proportions varied from area to area depending on the type of farming. The peasant aristocracy were the yeomen - a minority of freeholders who cultivated or grazed mainly their own land; the most prosperous of them were a cross between common men and gentlemen, and by increasing the size of their farms and adopting the life style of gentlemen, they might establish themselves as such. Lower in status than the yeoman but not sharply divided from the poorest of them were the husbandmen - smallholders who farmed on their own account but as tenants, any of whom might become yeomen by saving enough capital to buy land. In all but the smallest settlements there would be two or three craftsmen such as a smith, tailor, shoemaker and carpenter, making a poor living as semi-independent workers in their own cottages. The largest single group would be wage labourers, either hired yearly by an employer and living in his household (women and girls as domestic servants, men and boys as ploughmen, carters and shepherds) or hired and paid by the day. One family in every three or four might be either cottagers, making what living they could by casual day labour and self-employment in and about their hovels on the waste, or paupers subsisting on poor relief, begging and poaching. Perhaps half of all the families lived more or less constantly in want, and the prosperity of the others would depend on each year's harvest. In Northumberland, border feuding exacerbated this situation.

The most important person in the village, to whom all deference was due, was the squire. He was a gentleman of breeding, perhaps a knight or a baronet, the chief landlord and employer of labour, and,

if a justice of the peace, a power in the neighbourhood. Unless he chose to reside on one of his other estates, he lived in the manor house in some style, with a domestic establishment that might almost be the same as the village community, where this was a small one. If the manor house was unoccupied, the more important yeomen and husbandmen would dominate the village. Next in the social hierarchy was the parson. His influence as the spiritual mentor of the rustic community was potentially great. The church he served was the principal building and focal point of village life. Everybody met there for the Sunday service, and absentees were criticised from the pulpit. The parson's sermons linked a simple and unlettered congregation with the world outside. Baptism, marriage and burial took place in the church. Public meetings were held there and public notices were displayed in the porch. There, in the absence of any other suitable storeplace, the communal property of the village was to be found - the clock or sundial, the pieces of armour, the fire-fighting apparatus, the common coffin, the records in the parish chest. If there happened to be a school, that, too, was likely to be found there.

The communal affairs of the village were conducted by all the ratepaying male householders meeting at the vestry. This elected the annual, unpaid parish officers - churchwardens, petty constable, surveyor of highways, overseers of the poor - who administered the rates that were levied on householders for certain purposes. If the manor court still functioned, this regulated the cultivation of the open fields and customary rights on the common, but in some villages these responsibilities had passed to the vestry. In addition, the parish officers together with the incumbent might be trustees of any

parochial charities given for poor relief or village education.

Throughout much of the country, rising prosperity for landlords and yeomen (but not for wage labourers) led to a large-scale rebuilding of villages and market towns, farmhouses and gentlemen's estates between about 1570 and 1640.[2] This was an indication not only of growing affluence but also of a desire for better standards of living among those of reasonable means. It was this affluence and this desire that prompted a growing demand for education and the endowment of schools and scholarships during this period.

Life in the village was isolated and self-contained. There was no shop supplied from outside; whatever was needed was made by families themselves or by the village tradesmen, or was bought at neighbouring markets and fairs or at the door from pedlars and chapmen. Unless the village stood on a main road it probably had no inn, though there might be several alehouses - ordinary cottages licensed by the JP's. The nearest apothecary would live in the market town; in emergency the parson might dispense physic, the blacksmith draw teeth. There might be no school, or one that existed only intermittently. It was still an oral, largely illiterate society, ignorant and superstitious. Except for the gentlefolk, heavy manual labour was everybody's daily lot - for children as well as adults; homemade recreations at traditional festivals offered the only relief from the monotony of work. Solitary, and self-reliant, the community was also inbred, closely knit and introverted. It is interesting that during interviews conducted for this study, several respondents used adjectives like 'inbred', 'introverted' and 'parochial' to describe their village

[2] HOSKINS, W.G. The Rebuilding of Rural England 1570-1640 'Past and Present IV' 1953. pp. 44-59

today. In spite of vast economic and educational differences, it is possible that the social structure of the 20th century village retains certain elements of isolation and aloofness associated with the 17th century.

It is difficult to find out much about children of this period - how they were brought up, what their place was in the family and in the local community. As in medieval times there seems to have been no conception of a child's world different from the adult's. Death in childbirth or infancy was a matter of course for both rich and poor. Family portraits and funeral effigies show boys and girls dressed much alike until the age of five or six; from then on they are dressed like adults. From about the age of seven, children shared the world of their elders, mixing freely with them at home, at work and at recreation. At that age, if of peasant families they might be at work in the fields - bird-scaring, sheep-minding, stone-clearing; if of more affluent family they might be boarded away from home, the boys at grammar school, the girls in some genteel household. At seven they could be married, or make legal precontract of marriage, and there are cases of children being married even before this age.[3] At seven, too, the common law presumed them capable of criminal intent like adults.

Poverty must have denied practically all schooling to the great mass of the rural population living on or near the subsistence level as servants, labourers, cottagers and paupers. They could neither afford school fees nor do without their children's earnings. In any case, they had little incentive, for schooling offered few returns: the daily round of physical drudgery left no time or energy for

[3] PINCMBECK, I., & HEWITT, M. Children in English Society from Tudor Times to the Eighteenth Century. London 1969. pp. 44 ff.

reading, there was no occasion for writing, and small chance of self-advancement in a stratified social order. In the countryside educational demand and supply must have varied from area to area, depending on the prosperity of the yeomen and husbandmen, the villagers most able to afford schooling for their children. In town there was always more incentive and more opportunity for the poor as well as the prosperous to become literate. The Northumbrian market towns of Hexham and Alnwick had their grammar schools from the 16th century.

As from earlier times, most children probably received whatever education they had informally, at their mother's knee, playing together in the village street and watching and imitating their elders at work in the cottage and the fields. Those who went to school would start at the age of five or six and stay no more than one or two years, attending very irregularly, according to the family means and the distance to be walked from home. When so many children died young and the expectation of life for adults was little over thirty, any longer schooling was a poor investment. Thus few of the boys and girls in the village school would come from labouring families. Mostly their fathers would be yeomen, husbandmen or craftsmen, with more means and motives for literacy; but the sons and daughters of the squire and parson might be there as well, unless they were taught privately in the hall or the rectory. Professor Hoskins writes that 'The only formal schooling the Duke of Buckingham (George Villiers) had was at the village school of Billesdon as the son of a Leicestershire squire'. [4]

The essential task of the village, or petty school was to teach spelling and reading; it was often known as the ABC school and the

[4] HOSKINS, W.G. Midland England. London 1949. p. 88

teacher as the 'abcdarian', though in some schools writing and counting would be taught as well. The horn book and the absey book provided the basic reading material, followed by the primer and catechism. This seems to have been as far as ordinary petty schools went, and most children probably left once they had mastered the rudiments of this stage. If they stayed longer it was to practise their reading skill and extend their religious knowledge by working through the psalter and testaments and recent works of protestant piety and devotion, and also to learn how to write - if the master was competent to teach them.

Whether taught by a man or a woman, most schools were private ventures conducted for fees, and a village with too few children to make a school viable would be without one altogether, or have one only intermittently. Some parishes benefitted from the educational philanthropy of the age and had an endowed charity school, where the master received an annual salary for teaching a specified number of poor children free, but even he was usually dependent on fee-payers as well in order to make a living. So precarious was the livelihood of teaching that it was frequently combined with some other sedentary occupation that could be carried on as children stood or sat around.

Teaching the elements was regarded as menial work - work which only the poor were expected to take up. Clearly, too, women as well as men made it their livelihood. School dames were usually widows or spinsters, but there are instances of schoolmasters' wives who taught. A man at Reculver in Kent, presented at the archdeacon's visitation in 1619 for teaching without licence, confessed 'that his wife, by the minister's consent, teacheth two or three children their horn-books'. [5]

[5] HUSSEY, A. (Ed.) Visitations of the Archdeaconry of Canterbury. Archaeologia Cantiana, XXV. 1902. p.49

As in pre-Reformation times, teaching the parish children remained one of the duties expected of the parish clerk. 'That he endeavour himself to teach young children to read if he be able to do so' was a usual injunction of Elizabethan bishops. Visitation records show him acting as schoolmaster in some places, but insufficiently literate to do so in others. In Yorkshire the parish clerk was teaching the children at Filey in 1595 but at Sheriff Hutton he could 'not write nor scarce read'.[6] Often during this period, however, the role of schoolmaster was assumed by the incumbent, and this was a task encouraged by the bishops in order to spread religious uniformity through instruction in the catechism. The canon of 1571 ordered those clergy who were not preachers to teach the children to read and write. By the canons of 1604, in every parish without a public school the curate was to be given preference over other candidates for the bishop's licence if able and willing to teach 'for the better increase of his own living and training up of children in principles of true religion'. Richard Muncaster, first headmaster of Merchant Taylors' school wrote that, 'every parish hath a minister, if none else in the parish, which can help writing and reading'.[7] After about 1640, teaching the village school tended to devolve on the parish clerk rather than the parson, as the latter's social status rose.

If the school was endowed, it might have its own small schoolhouse; otherwise an ordinary cottage would be used. If neither of these were available, the school was usually to be found in the church. In Twelfth Night (c. 1600) Malvolio appears to Maria 'like a pedant that keeps a school i''the church'. The antiquary John Aubrey writes

[6] PURVIS, J.S. Tudor Parish Documents, York 1959. pp. 190, 193, 194

[7] QUICK, R.H. (Ed.) Positions. London 1888. p.139

that Thomas Hobbes, the philosopher, went to school first in 1592 in Westport Church, before he was eight.[8] In 1624 John Evelyn, aged three, started school in the church porch at Wotton in Surrey, where his father was the squire.[9]

1.3 The Village School in the 18th Century

Such elementary education as was available for the mass of the population in the eighteenth century continued to be provided by private enterprise, supplemented by philanthropy.

Private-venture schools covered a wide range of scope and competence from English and common schools in towns, some of which were hardly distinguishable from middle-class academies, to the lowliest kind of dame school, where some old woman looked after the village children in her parlour and taught them to read, knit and sew for whatever their parents could afford to pay each week. In larger villages and market towns common day schools which taught reading, writing and arithmetic were typical in a country still predominantly rural and agricultural, with a poor and sparse population. Many villages and hamlets in the deep country had no school at all, because there were too few children to provide a teacher with a living.

Private enterprise schools were probably small and unorganised; they were usually held in the teacher's own house, and they tended to have an uncertain and intermittent existence. When demand fell, as in time of extreme hardship, they would close, temporarily or permanently. The teacher would find other work or move to some other place where the prospects for keeping a school seemed better.

[8] CLARK, A. (Ed.) Aubrey's Brief Lives. Oxford 1898. Vol. 1 p. 328

[9] DE BEER, E.S. (Ed.) The Diary of John Evelyn. Oxford 1955. Vol. 2 p. 6

During the eighteenth century these private venture schools were supplemented throughout the country by charity schools founded by philanthropy, either from charitable impulse or ulterior motives. Charity schools to spread literacy and religion among the poor had been founded since before the Reformation, but in smaller numbers than grammar schools. By the end of the seventeenth century this was reversed, and educational funds were predominantly made available for the schooling of the poor, at a suitably elementary level. Being endowed, these charity schools had a more or less guaranteed income and so a more permanent existence than private-venture schools. The founder conveyed property to trustees - often the parish officers - and they paid the yield or a stipulated part of it as salary to a master. In return he was usually required to teach free a specified number of local children nominated by the trustees. Necessity almost always compelled him, however, to admit fee-paying pupils as well, and to that extent he was not easily distinguishable from the private-venture teacher. Indeed, most educational charities consisted of only a small annual sum which the trustees paid to a private teacher to give free tuition in his school to an agreed number of poor children.[10] Haydon Bridge's Shaftoe Trust School in Northumberland started in much this fashion. Today it thrives as a County High School, while its benifice aids the community markedly.

If a village had no endowed school, or only a poor one, and if its population was too small to attract a private-venture teacher dependent on fees for a living, the parish officers or the inhabitants collectively might offer financial inducements. The parish might pay him a small salary out of the parish stock - the revenue from miscellaneous charities - or from the poor rate, or the church rate.

[10] JONES, M.G. The Charity School Movement Cambridge 1938 pp 36 - 84

Alternatively, or additionally, the villagers might make voluntary contributions in money or in kind towards his livelihood. Sometimes this took the form of a customary levy, for example a number of sheaves at harvest, or a few pence a year on each oxgang, as at Rudston in East Yorkshire, or the householders in rotation might give him his dinner, as at nearby Garton-on-the-Wolds. There in 1743 he had fourteen scholars and 'his meat from house to house is most he gets. For his instruction, he receives very small wages'. In places which were too poor to attract a master of any kind, teaching the children might fall to a mere boy, as at Hutton Bonville, a village of a dozen families near Northallerton, where in 1764 the curate reported Thomas Rowntree, 'of tender years', teaching 'a private school of ABCDarians'; or the work might be undertaken for nothing in the interests of religion by the curate himself, a man who was hardly more respected than the schoolmaster in the social hierarchy. Where support of some kind was given by the parish, the master continued to be the parish clerk. The school was then likely to be still found in some part of the church - the choir, a former chantry chapel, an aisle boarded or bricked off, or the ringing chamber under the tower; graffiti and mutilated monuments are often a reminder of the school's former presence, It was only in the 1830's or 1840's that the village school left the village church, when new schoolhouses were being built and churches put to less secular uses.

1.4 The Village School in the 19th and 20th Centuries

In many parts of the countryside, in the final decades of the 18th century and the early years of the 19th century, the impact of new methods, enclosures, increased population and nearby urban development was felt. Poverty and illiteracy were acute in rural

areas during this period, as they were in the new towns. One of the first inspectors of elementary schools, reporting on Norfolk in 1840, described how the consolidation of farms and enclosure of commons had altered the position of the farm labourer and social relationships in the countryside since the second half of the eighteenth century. Social change had 'placed vast intervals between classes which were formerly in easy juxta-position. It has interrupted to a great extent the social sympathies'.[11] The disturbance of a way of life was accompanied by few compensations. 'The rural poor and rural rebellion were as evident in the early nineteenth century as were urban squalor and urban protest'.[12]

One of the more stable aspects of village life continued to be the school. While it is possible to look on the 19th century as a period when, generally in England, the disparate strands of local education became enmeshed in the state clutch, village schools often maintained their identity and individualism. Some continued to be supported by the parish or subscriptions, like the Penny School in Hexham. Some were established as charity schools; others were decayed endowed schools or indistinguishable from dame schools. The majority of them were Church of England schools and became National schools, often adopting the monitorial system in spite of their small size.

Certainly legislative developments like the Privy Council on Education (1839) and the 1870 Education Act brought a degree of uniformity to a hitherto irregular and inconsistent scene. Indeed it can be said without too much cynicism that rural education suffered by the excessive zeal of the 19th century educators and by the great

[11] Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education 1840-41. London 1841. pp. 446-7

[12] LAWSON, J. & SILVER, H. A Social History of Education in England. London 1973. p. 227

reforms of the present century. The great era of school building at the turn of the century stemmed from the requirement in the 1870 Education Act for the provision of elementary education to cover, in general, the ages of 5 to about 13. By Mundella's Act of 1880 it was a duty for parents to ensure that their children received what the previous 1876 Act had called 'efficient elementary instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic'. These were all-age schools not much revered by educationists but they achieved their purposes; to provide an elementary education and to help to retain the indigenous population in the community. That is, to perpetuate a labour force literate and numerate enough to do its job,but not so emancipated as not to know its place. All this was linked with a selective system, gradually growing in influence, whereby at the age of 11 children could qualify for a place at a grammar school, the place being free, part free, or wholly paid according to performance and availability of places. There was, therefore, even at this time, an opportunity for the bright but poor child to rise out of his traditional station if parents were sufficiently interested, or brave enough, to take the chance.

The seeds of the decline of rural life were already sown well before the Forster Act. Village life was already eroded by the effects of both the agrarian and the industrial revolutions. The era of school building was already making provision for a reduced population. The traditional village crafts were fast disappearing, farms were becoming more labour-intensive and the squirarchy was beginning to feel the icy fingers of progress upon its back. Village schools built at the turn of the nineteenth century, while local, were already small, some very small, although of course the number in them makes the modern educationist incredulous. The idea of 80 to 90 children, including

large 13 year olds, in rooms we now consider inadequate for 30 speaks volumes for late nineteenth century teaching styles and practice.

The 1944 Butler Act - a great piece of social engineering as well as of educational philosophy - created a major change in rural life and set in train an inevitable sequence of events which now causes considerable problems. The all-age school was to be superseded by the tripartite system of secondary education post-11 for all - the particular type being determined by the ability and aptitude of children. Thus, village schools which did not become secondary schools - and few did - were beheaded of their 11+ children. The implementation of this great change was delayed in many rural areas but by the 1960's it was largely finished just in time to face the comprehensive dilemma. In Northumberland this resulted in a 3-tier system. The changes potentially reduced numbers in the new village primary schools but the effects of such reductions were masked by two other factors; firstly the post-war bulge in the birthrate and secondly by the increasing tendency to accept children into school before they became five.

There was another change, however; one which maybe has never been completely accepted in some rural areas. Previously only clever children went away from the village to the local grammar school; now all post 9 year-olds would go. This not only increased the chances that maturing adults would find work and homes in nearby towns but it finally killed the myth that rural children needed a rural, and by implication inferior, set of opportunities or challenges to those provided for their urban colleagues.

In order to encapsulate the great educational events of the 19th and 20th centuries in a situation appropriate to this study, it seems appropriate to examine in detail the development of education in one Northumbrian village during this period. Newbrough, situated in the

Tyne Valley 25 miles west of Newcastle, was for the first half of the 19th century a remote hamlet. With the advent of the Newcastle-Carlisle railway its horizons and prospects expanded. But it has never become a commercial growth point or a commuter settlement. As such it offers an example of a community evolving in a reasonably stable situation. It is included in this study, and its school is the subject of the following Case Study.

1.5 Case Study - Newbrough School

Newbrough was founded and formed into a borough by the Cumin family in 1221 when this family obtained a charter for a market at Thornton, which was the name of the estate upon which this 'new burgh' was situated. Its position on the old Stanegate, and the fertile lands around, were important in its development. Quarrying for lime and stone continued until recent years. The church of St. Peter Stonecroft (1865) stands on the site of an earlier 13th century chapel.

In the early part of the 19th century, education of a rudimentary character was offered in a subscription school in the village by a succession of clergymen. In 1818 there are 15 children recorded as scholars in parish records.[13]

The next entry of significance is as follows:

'Great inconvenience having been felt in the Chapelry of Newbrough from there being no school, a meeting of proprietors of estates in the Chapelry, and others interested, was held on August 10th, 1852.

The meeting resolved:

(a) that a subscription be raised for the purpose of erecting a school to be conveyed to the trustee or trustees for the benefit of the chapelry.

(b) That the school should be in connection with the Church of England.

13 Newbrough Parish Records. 1800 - 1852

(c) That the school be open to the inspection of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education in consideration of a grant of money towards the building fund.'[14]

A committee was formed with the vicar, the Revd. C. Bird as chairman, secretary and treasurer.

Application was made to the patron of the living, W.B. Beaumont, of Bywell Hall, to the Duke of Northumberland, to the Governors of the Greenwich Hospital Estates, and to other proprietors of estates in the chapelry and neighbourhood for aid in providing a school.

In answer to these applications the Governors of the Greenwich Hospital granted a piece of ground for the site of a School, a Master's house, garden and playground.

Under the authority of an act passed in the fifth year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria 'to afford further facilities for the conveyance and endowment of Sites for Schools', the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital 'freely and voluntarily and without valuable consideration paid to us, grant and convey unto the Vicar of the Parish of Warden', a piece or parcel of land at or near the Butt Bank in the chaplery of Newbrough.

On this land and on land to the west belonging to the heirs of the Reverend Henry Wastell, there was to be erected a school for the education of children and adults, or children only, of the labouring, manufacturing and other poorer classes in the parochial chapelry of Newbrough and the Township of Warden. The title of the land and buildings erected thereon were conveyed to the Vicar or Warden and his successors. The school was to be open at all times to the inspection of the Inspectors of Schools.

14 Newbrough School Log Books. 1852 - 1982. Northumberland County Council Archives.

The chief minister of the chapelry of Newbrough was to have the superintendence of the religious and moral instruction of all the scholars attending the school with power to use the premises for the purpose of a Sunday School under his exclusive control and management. In all other respects control of the school was to be exercised by a committee consisting of the chief minister of the Chapelry, his licensed curate if appointed, the church wardens, and ten other persons. These persons were to continue being members of the Church of England and contributors to the fund of the school to the amount of twenty shillings every year. Any vacancies which arose were to be filled by people similarly qualified and elected by majority vote of members of the Church of England who were contributors to the fund of the school of ten shillings at least for the year of the election. Each person was to have one vote per ten shillings of contributions up to a maximum of six votes.

No person would be appointed or continue to be master or mistress of the school who was not a member of the Church of England.

The committee was to select one member to act as secretary to keep the minutes of the meetings, the principal minister of the district to be the chairman of all meetings.

The instruction at the said school was to comprise at least the following branches of school learning: reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, scripture, history and (in the case of girls) needlework. It was to be a fundamental regulation and practice of the school that the bible be read daily by the children. No child would be required to take any form of religious instruction to which his or her parent should object.

The committee, at a meeting to be held in June each year, was to elect a committee of not more than twelve ladies, being members of the Church of England, to assist them in the visitation and management of the girl's and infant's schools.

The Governors of the Greenwich Hospital provided £30 towards the building fund and in addition to this the sum of £119 was contributed by public subscribers.

Plans and elevations for the proposed school were furnished by J. Dobson, architect, free of expense.

The plans were approved by the Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council and a grant of £55 was accorded from funds at their disposal.

It was decided that the erection of a school based upon the original plans would involve a greater outlay than the funds of the school committee were likely to meet. The plans were altered and reduced by W. Benson, architect, free of expense. These alterations were consented to by the Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council.

Tenders were requested from any persons willing to contract for the erection of the school. The lowest tender was that of J. & W. Phillipson of Wark whose proposal was accepted. The buildings were completed for occupation by November 12th 1853.

In October 1853, before the school at Butt Bank was opened, a meeting of the managers decided the terms upon which the school was to be conducted.

Mr. Charles Forster was appointed schoolmaster at a salary of £20 per annum guaranteed for 3 years. The Master's pence payable by the scholars were to be at the following rates: Children under 7 years of age 3 shillings per quarter, children from 7 to 10 years of age 4/- per quarter, children from 10 to 13 years of age 5/- per quarter, children from 13 of age upwards 7/- per quarter.

The school was to be opened daily with prayers.

The hours of attendance were to be 8.30 a.m.to 12.00 noon in the morning and 1.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. in the afternoon.

The holidays were to be Saturday of every week, one week at Easter, two weeks at Christmas and four weeks at Harvest.

The Sunday School would have twenty minutes attendance in school before a service and ninety minutes attendance in school when there was no church service.

The new school at Butt Bank was opened on November 12th, 1853 and was for boys only, while the existing small school in the village was to be a girls' school.

In April 1854 the school managers resolved that the sum of £2 per annum be allowed to Mrs. Forster the schoolmaster's wife for cleaning the school. For many years the school closed at 3 p.m. on a Friday so that this cleaning could take place.

In December of the same year the managers resolved that the schoolmaster be asked to resign in April 1855.

In April 1855 Mr. William Gilhespy was appointed schoolmaster in place of Charles Forster.

During that year the pence paid by the children was changed to 4d per week per child, but the third child of any family would pay 2d per week. This was altered later in the year to 4d per week for the first child in a family, 3d per week for the second child, 2d per week for the third child and 1d per week for the fourth child.

Mr. Gilhespy resigned the post of schoolmaster in February 1858. Mr. W. Haswell was appointed to the post in March.

In April 1859 plans for a schoolmaster's house were prepared. The house was completed that year.

Mr. Haswell resigned his post in 1861 and Mr. Chatt was then appointed to the post.

In March 1862 a letter was sent by the trustees of the boys' school to Mrs. Wastell the widow of the Rev. Henry Wastell requesting that the girls' school be conveyed to the Chapelry of Newbrough under the control of proper trustees, namely themselves. A reply was received

from Mrs. Wastell in May of that year, politely but firmly refusing to do so.

In 1866 Mr. Chatt resigned his post as schoolmaster and Mr. Ralph Moorhouse was appointed to the post.

In 1866 the Trustees agreed that a pig-house be built at the school house in order that the schoolmaster might supplement his salary. In 1862 a section of a Revised Code of Regulations for schools placed under Government inspection made it compulsory for a diary or log book to be kept by the principal teacher of the school. The boys' school was placed under government inspection in October 1865 and the girls' school in Newbrough in May 1867. On October 9th 1865, 8 boys attended the school. By November 17th the next month the number had risen to nearly 70.

In May 1867 when the girls' school was placed under government inspection there were 33 girls in attendance. The schoolmistress at that time was Annie Kirk.

From that time the schools were inspected annually by H.M.I.'s.

The attendance at the schools during the following years was affected by children having to work both at home and in the fields. The Hiring Days in Hexham drastically reduced the attendance until finally the schools were usually closed for that day.

Children often left school at a very early age to commence work, some of them being only eight years old.

Epidemics of measles, scarlet fever, diphtheria and whopping cough sometimes caused the schools to be closed for several weeks.

Both schools during this period were usually conducted by a certificated teacher assisted by one or two pupil-teachers and one or two monitors chosen from the older children. The pupil-teachers were instructed by the certificated teacher before and after school hours.

A new classroom to accommodate 50 boys was added to the boys' school in 1876.

In 1880 it was decided to build a new girls' school and schoolmistress's house at Butt Bank opposite the boys' school, with the aid of public subscription. This was carried out at a cost of £500 and the school was occupied in January 1881.

After the opening of the girls' school at Butt Bank there were five different head mistresses during the period 1881 to 1890. Finally in 1890 Mary Jackson was appointed.

The two schools then began a long settled period under these two head teachers. Mr. Butland completed more than thirty years service in the boys' school and Miss Jackson completed more than forty years service in the girls' school. For most of this period there were about 100 children in each school.

In 1893 the Managers decided to free the schools in all respects, so that there would be no further fees paid by the children. It was during this year that children in the two schools began to take examinations for County Council Scholarships for higher education.

At a managers' meeting in 1894 it was agreed that the boys' school could be used as a night school under the direction of Mr. Butland.

During the year 1896 it was discovered that the school was having financial difficulties and the subscribers to the schools were requested to pay an extra half year's subscription.

In 1897, alterations to the school house were carried out, these adding two extra bedrooms at the rear of the house.

By 1901 the Managers were having financial difficulties in running two schools and consideration was given to combining the schools into one mixed school. It was agreed to investigate the possibility of enlarging the boys' school to accommodate all the pupils. It was discovered that the cost of enlarging the building was greater than

anticipated and the idea was abandoned.

In 1903 one of the government inspectors suggested that the girls' school should be enlarged to accommodate infant boys as well as infant girls. The Managers did not consider the scheme was necessary.

During the 1914-18 war several old boys of the school saw active service. Twenty-five of these, including the son of the headmaster, lost their lives. On August 30th, 1920, a memorial tablet was unveiled in the school. This remains in position.

At the end of January 1924, Mr. Butland resigned after more than 32 years as headmaster and was succeeded in February by Mr. J.M. Gloag.

In 1932 Miss Jackson retired after more than 42 years as headmistress of the girls' school. At this time the schools were reorganised as a single mixed school with 140 children on the registers.

Mr. Gloag continued as head teacher in the school, and the infants department moved into the girls' school building. A certificated assistant mistress was appointed to take charge of the infants department under the direction of Mr. Gloag. Woodwork and Domestic Science were also offered in the girls' school.

In 1934 the boys' school was enlarged and the infants' department was transferred to the main building. The girls' school became the school hall and woodwork room. After an unfavourable report by the County medical officer on the sanitation of the two schools in 1928, negotiations were commenced on bringing in a water supply. The supply was finally connected in 1934. The school playground was concreted and the school was formally re-opened by the Bishop of Newcastle.

During 1936 several trees were removed from the ground at the west end of the school to make room for a school garden.

A reorganisation of schools in the Haydon Bridge area was proposed in 1938 by the County Education Committee, and it was suggested that senior pupils from Newbrough should be transferred to the Shaftoe Trust School at Haydon Bridge. The Managers at first opposed this

scheme as so much money had been spent on improving the boys' school. Finally they agreed to comply with the wishes of the Education Committee. The senior pupils were transferred to Haydon Bridge at the end of August 1939.

As the outbreak of war with Germany was imminent, September 1st 1939 was evacuation day. Twenty six children and one teacher were evacuated from the east end of Newcastle to Newbrough, and were accepted into the school. When war was declared the school was closed for one week and the senior pupils were brought back from Haydon Bridge. At the end of November the senior pupils were once more transferred to Haydon Bridge and the school became a C.E. Aided Primary School for children aged from five to eleven years. The number of children on the registers at this time was 65.

In 1940 the school was finally wired for electric light.

In 1942 Mr. Gloag retired and he was succeeded by Mr. G.R. Wood as Head Teacher. During the same year the milk-in-schools scheme was introduced.

In December 1943 the school meals service commenced in the school, the girls' school building being used as a kitchen and dining hall.

In May 1945 the school was granted three days holiday for V.E. Day and in September, when the war with Japan ended, the school took part in a Thanksgiving Week in the village.

At the end of 1954 Mr. Wood took another appointment, and Mr. G. Rowe was appointed Head Teacher of the school.

By 1958 plans were being discussed for the remodelling of the building.

In 1960 it was decided by the Education Committee that senior pupils would be transferred to Haltwhistle Modern School instead of Haydon Bridge School.

During 1962 work began on the building of Stage 1 of a new school.

On the 26th July 1963 the neighbouring Hardhaugh Primary School was closed and the children were transferred to Newbrough School.

At the beginning of June 1964 Stage 1 of the new school was occupied by its pupils. Stage 11 was to be completed at some future date but it has never been carried out.

On October 12th 1964 the Bishop of Newcastle conducted the dedication ceremony for the new school.

In January 1967 Grindon Primary School was closed and its pupils were transferred to Newbrough School. The number of pupils on the registers about this time was just under 100.

In December 1968 Mr. Rowe retired from the post of head teacher. During his fourteen years of service it is recorded that the school choirs enjoyed continuous successes at the Tynedale Musical Festivals'.

In January 1969 Mr. N. Armin was appointed Head Teacher of the school.

In 1970 the number of children in the school increased, and by 1972 there were 142 children on the register, with five teaching staff. Shortly afterwards the number of children in the school began to decline and by the time reorganisation took place the number had reduced to 115.

In 1971 the meals-on-wheels scheme commenced with the meals being cooked in the school kitchen.

Reorganisation of education in schools in the Haydon Bridge area took place in 1974. Haydon Bridge Technical School became a High School, Haltwhistle Secondary School became a Middle School and Newbrough School became a First School for children aged five to nine years of age. The number of children in the school dropped sharply

to 65 and the staff was reduced to two. The number of children in the school has fallen steadily since that time and it is now a two-teacher school with 40 children on the register.

The appointment of a new head teacher in 1982 is perhaps an indicator that Newbrough School will remain open, inspite of the fickleness of the school roll over the past 150 years.

1.6 Conclusion

Drawing together the strands of the Newbrough Case Study results in a tapestry which in its broad outlines mirrors 19th and 20th century rural education. This education has been linked to the ebb and flow of village life. The expansion of a school has depended upon the fortune and prosperity of the community it served. It has, through the years, come to be identified with its environment. People have come to expect it to be there, and they have been prepared to support it financially and to participate in its affairs.

The advent of state education, far from securing the position of the village school, has made it more tenuous. The passing of all-age schools and the creation of first schools have resulted in decreased rolls at schools like Newbrough.

State education has, however, led gradually to greater security of tenure for teachers who, in the 19th century at least, lived in the village and took their place in the hierarchy of influential residents. Mr. Butland and Miss Jackson together served Newbrough for 75 years. They linked the 19th and 20th centuries and educated several generations of local children.

In particular, these children have spent their formative years in and around the village. They have provided visible evidence of the continuity of village life. In times of rapid social and industrial change they have subscribed to the notion of the virility and viability of the rural community.

CHAPTER 2

THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

2.1 Introduction

It is towards the community that the focus of this study now shifts. The intention is to explore some theories of community, and to follow this by a consideration of empirical studies of rural communities undertaken since 1945.

The concept of community has been the concern of sociologists for more than two hundred years, yet a satisfactory definition of it in sociological terms appears remote. The subjective feelings that the term Community conjures up frequently lead to a confusion between what it is (empirical description) and what the sociologist feels it should be (normative prescription). The reasons for this confusion can be related to the history of sociology itself. What the concept involves has not proved too difficult to elaborate; attempts to describe what it is, however, have proved impossible without making value judgments.

2.2 Development of Theories

'Community' was thought to be a good thing. Its passing was to be deplored, feared and regretted. The events surrounding the supposed causes of its eclipse - the democratic political revolutions of American and France and the industrial revolutions of Britain and, later, the remainder of Western Europe - were to some extent the starting point of Tocqueville, Comte, Tönnies, Le Play, Marx and Durkheim. In the nineteenth century 'community' occupied a position in the minds of intellectuals similar to the idea of 'contract' in the Age of Reason. The concept of community, however, was not an

objective construct. On the contrary, the ties of the community came from these thinkers' images of the good life. Community was thus used as a means of comparison with contemporarily exemplified society. Yet community, consisting as it did of what the particular writer believed it ought to consist of, was capable of encompassing any number of possibly contradictory values which each saw fit to include. This 'amorphous quality' [15] allowed social thinkers to favour community, no matter how diverse their interpretations of it might be. Overlying this positive evaluation of community, there was frequently a sense of nostalgia - of praising the past to blame the present - and the two themes combined when present 'society' was criticised with reference to past 'community'. The effects of industrialisation reinforced these feelings. Industrial society, and its result the city, was typified by competition and conflict. The community, and its result the village, was the antithesis of these. The impersonality and anonymity of industrial society were highlighted by reference to the close personal ties of the community. The trend appeared to be away from the latter and towards the former; thus there is in writers such as Comte 'a sense of the breakdown of the old'. [16] The community, in other words, was viewed as man's natural habitat.

Sir Henry Maine was not concerned with the community as such, but his work exercised a great influence upon his contemporaries and successors. What Maine wanted to know was how the institutions of his day had evolved from those of antiquity. On the basis of the early writings of the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans, Maine argued that early

[15] PETERSON, W. The Ideological Origins of Britain's New Towns American Institute of Planners Journal, XXXIV. 1968. pp. 160 - 70

[16] NISBET, R. The Sociological Tradition. London 1966. Chapter 3

society was patriarchal, the oldest male having held absolute supremacy over the extended family. Society as a whole was a conglomeration of familial units. In contrast, Maine noted, the basic unit of modern society was not the family in its extended form but the individual. Using the legal system as evidence, he discovered that primitive law was concerned with family groups as corporate entities defined by kinship. Crime was a corporate act; land was held jointly. When societies expanded, however, locality rather than kinship became the basis of organisation. The crux of Maine's argument was that the powers, privileges and duties once resident in the family had shifted to the state. And the nature of men's interrelations, instead of being based on his status, became based on individually-agreed contracts.

Another who used law as an index of social change was Durkheim. Durkheim's concern was for the 'moral consolidation' of the society in which he lived. What Durkheim feared was the disintegration of social relations into 'anomie' - the state of 'normlessness' where there was complete social breakdown - but what he perceived in contemporary society was not so much the breakdown of community as the transition from community based on one kind of social relations to community based on another, from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity. [17] According to Durkheim the increased division of labour in more advanced societies leads to organic solidarity based upon the interdependence of specialised parts, on diversity rather than similarity. He used legal indicators to show that as one type of solidarity advances, the other regresses; and it was organic solidarity that was increasing. Durkheim concluded that, far from community

[17] DURKHEIM, E. The Division of Labour in Society. New York. 1964.

disintegrating, society was becoming one big community.

If there is a specialist in the theory of community, however, it is Ferdinand Tönnies. Tönnies' book Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft [18] was first published in 1887. In Gemeinschaft ('community') human relationships are intimate, enduring and based on a clear understanding of where each person stands in society. A man's 'worth' is estimated according to who he is not what he has done - in other words, status is ascriptive, rather than achieved. In a community, roles are specific and consonant with one another; a man does not find his duties in one role conflicting with the duties that devolve upon him from another role. Members of a community are relatively immobile in a physical and a social way; individuals neither travel far from their locality of birth nor do they ascend the social hierarchy. In addition, the culture of the community is relatively homogeneous, for it must be so if roles are not to conflict or human relations to lose their intimacy. The moral custodians of a community, the family and the church, are strong, their code clear and their injunctions well internalized. There will be community sentiments involving close and enduring loyalties to the place and people. So community encourages immobility and makes it difficult for men to achieve status and wealth on the basis of their merits. Community makes for traditionalistic ways and at the very core of the community concept is an attachment to the conventions and mores of a place. Community will reinforce and encapsulate a moral code, raising moral tensions and rendering heterodoxy a serious crime, for in a community everyone is known and can be placed in the social structure. This results in a personalising

[18] TONNIES, F. Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. Germany 1887

of issues, events and explanations, because familiar names and characters become associated with everything that happens. Tönnies continued the nineteenth-century theme that community makes for solidary relations among men, a theme which over the years has laid stress on one factor for its basis - the territorial factor, the place, the locality. When sociologists now talk about community, they almost always mean a place in which people have some, if not complete, solidary relations. Yet community as originally used, though it included the local community, also went beyond it. It encompassed religion, work, family and culture; it referred to 'social bonds', to use Robert Nisbet's [19] term, characterised by emotional cohesion, depth, continuity and fullness.

Opposed to the concept of community was Gesellschaft (variously translated as 'society' or 'association') which essentially means everything that community is not. Gesellschaft refers to the large-scale, impersonal and contractual ties that were seen by the nineteenth century sociologists to be on the increase, at the expense of Gemeinschaft. This is the central idea which runs through many community studies; social change is conceptualised as a continuum between two polar types; Gemeinschaft or community and Gesellschaft or society. For Tönnies, there are three central aspects of Gemeinschaft; blood, place (land) and mind, with their sociological consequents of kinship, neighbourhood and friendship. Together, they were the home of virtue and morality. Gesellschaft, however, has something particular about it; in Tönnies' terms, 'all its activities are restricted to a definite end and a definite means of obtaining it'. [20] In Gemeinschaft can be found what Max Weber [21] calls 'traditional' authority whereas Gesellschaft

[19] NISBET, op. cit., p. 6

[20] TONNIES, op. cit., p. 192

[21] Introduction to Tönnies, op cit.

incorporates what he would call 'rational-legal' authority. The conferring of causal status on the concept of community is the essence of Tönnies' typological use of it.

Tönnies' greatest legacy is this typological usage - a typology usually expressed in terms of a dichotomy. The 'community-society' dichotomy along with 'authority-power', 'status-class', 'sacred-secular', 'alienation-progress', have been represented by Nisbet as the unit ideas of the sociological tradition. Apart from their conceptual significance in sociology, they may be regarded as epitomisations of the conflict between tradition and modernism, between the old order and the new. They remain the most relevant theoretical statement for this study.

The Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft dichotomy can be incorporated into the structural-functional theories of Talcott Parsons. What Parsons terms 'pattern-variables' form the basis of his system for the analysis of social action. They are seen as continua or 'ranges' between polar opposites, each of which expressed a 'dilemma' of choice between two alternatives that every 'actor' faces in every social situation. As Parsons states, the clusters at the ends of these continua "very closely characterize what in much sociological literature have been thought of as polar types of institutional structure, the best known version of which perhaps has been the Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft dichotomy of Tönnies'; [22]

1. Affectivity versus affective neutrality: which refers to whether immediate self-gratification or its deferment is expected.
2. Specificity versus diffuseness: which refers to whether the scope of a relationship is narrow, like that between a bureaucrat and his client, or broad and inclusive as between a mother and her child or between spouses.

[22] PARSONS, T. and SHILS, E. Towards a General Theory of Action New York. 1952. pp. 207-8

3. Universalism versus particularism: which refers to whether action is governed by generalised standards (equal opportunity) or in terms of a reference scheme peculiar to the actors in the relationship (e.g. nepotism).

4. Quality versus performance (also called ascription versus achievement): which refers to whether the characterisation of each actor by the others is based on who or what the person is or on what he can do, on whether he is the son of a duke (ascription) or a college graduate (achievement).

Community especially in rural terms seems to involve particularism and ascription and diffuseness and affectivity - as a consequence of kinship being important and of stability and 'knowing' everyone. On the other hand, the pattern in most industrial societies is that of universalism and achievement and specificity and affective neutrality. There is a tendency for these pattern-variables to co-vary between the extremes, although all societies show mixtures of the two sets of characteristics. The relative emphasis differs and the pattern-variables can be used as more precise analytic tools to describe the loss or otherwise of community.

2.3 Definitions of Community

The analysis of the various definitions of community was at one time a thriving sociological industry. The piece de resistance was George A. Hillery Jr's analysis of ninety-four definitions in his paper, 'Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement'.[23] Hillery's conclusion did not advance the analysis much further. He concluded, 'There is one element, however, which can be found in all of the concepts, and (if its mention seems obvious) it is specified merely

[23] HILLERY, G.A. (Jr.), Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement Rural Sociology, 20. 1955.

to facilitate a positive delineation of the degree of heterogeneity; all of the definitions deal with people. Beyond this common basis, there is no agreement'[24].

He was able to discover sixteen concepts. These concepts were linked by twenty-two different combinations. The following table is an adaptation of Hillery's, showing his two major distinguishing categories. Generic community refers to the use of the word community as a conceptual term. Rural communities refer to a particular type of community. The prevalence, which Hillery discovered, of conjoining community with a specifically rural environment, can be seen as the continuing presence of the anti-urban trait in sociology referred to earlier.

See Table 1 on page 35

Despite Hillery's conclusion that there is an absence of agreement, beyond the fact that community involves people, quite a lot which is apposite to this study can be gained from his analysis. Not all the definitions can be correct; that is to say that community cannot be all of these definitions in their entirety. A community cannot be an area and not an area, though significantly Hillery found that no author denied that area could be an element of community. All but three of the definitions clearly mention the presence of a group of people interacting; those that do not, have an ecological orientation. Sixty-nine of the ninety-four definitions agree that community includes social interaction, area and some ties or bonds in common. Seventy, or almost three-quarters, agree on the presence of area and social interaction as necessary elements of community; but more than three-quarters (seventy-three) agree on the joint inclusion of social interaction and common ties. Thus a majority of definitions include the following components of community: area, common ties and social interaction.[25]

[24] Ibid. p. 117

[25] Ibid. p. 118

Table 1

A Classification of Selected DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNITY (after Hillery)

DISTINGUISHING IDEAS OR ELEMENTS MENTIONED IN THE DEFINITIONS	NUMBER OF DEFINITIONS
1. Generic Community	
a) Social Interaction	
1. Geographic Area	
A. Self-sufficiency	8
B. Common Life	9
Kinship	2
C. Consciousness of Kind	7
D. Possession of common ends, norms, means	20
E. Collection of institutions	2
F. Locality Groups	5
G Individuality	2
2. Presence of some common characteristic, other than area	
A. Self-sufficiency	1
B. Common Life	3
C. Consciousness of Kind	5
D. Possession of common ends, norms, means	5
3. Social System	1
4. Individuality	3
5. Totality of Attitudes	1
6. Process	2
b) Ecological Relationships	3
11. Rural Community	
a) Social Interaction	
1. Geographic Area	
A. Self-sufficiency	1
B. Common Life	3
C. Consciousness of Kind	3
D. Possession of common ends, norms, means	3
E. Locality group	5
TOTAL DEFINITIONS	94

A consideration of a few definitions that have succeeded Hillery's analysis now follows. Sussman has produced an omnibus definition: 'A community is said to exist when interaction between individuals has the purpose of meeting individual needs and obtaining group goals .... a limited geographical area is another feature of the community .... The features of social interaction, structures for the gratification of physical, social and psychological needs, and limited geographical area are basic to the definition of community'[26].

Kaufman's paper, 'Toward an Interactional Conception of Community'[27] argues that centralisation, specialisation and the increase of impersonal relationships are hastening the decline of the community. The first two aspects of his formal definition are similar to those of Sussman - that community is a place (a relatively small one), and secondly, that community indicates a configuration as to way of life, both as to how people do things and what they want. That is, their institutions and their collective goals. Kaufman's third notion concerns collective action: 'Persons in a community should not only be able to, but frequently do, act together in the common concern of life'.[28] There are thus three elements in Kaufman's interactional model of the community:

1. the community participant
2. the community groups and associations
3. the phases and processes of community action

[26] MARVIN, B. SUSSMAN (ed.), Community Structure and Analysis, New York, Crowell, 1959. pp. 1 - 2

[27] HAROLD F. Kaufman, 'Toward an Interactional Conception of Community' Social Forces. 38. 1959

[28] Ibid., p. 9

Sutton and Kolaja add some variables to the study of action in the community, but do not really elaborate a definition despite the title of their paper, 'The Concept of Community'.[29] Community is defined as 'a number of families residing in a relatively small area within which they have developed a more or less complete socio-cultural definition imbued with collective identification and by means of which they solve problems arising from the sharing of an area'.[30] The four crucial variables as they see them are:

1. Number of actors
2. Awareness of action
3. Goal of action
4. Recipients of action

They are attempting a convergence between conceptions of community and conceptions of community action. To do this they cross-classify these four variables and develop a sixteen-fold table which, they argue, can be used to classify community action.

It now appears that something of an impasse has been reached concerning the definition of community. As Hillery has observed: 'The significant question concerns the nature of social groups, not whether a ninety-fifth definition of community is possible'.[31]

One solution to the problems of the definition of community, indeed an avoidance of the term 'community' altogether, has been proposed by Margaret Stacey.[32] If institutions are locality based and interrelated there may well be, she argues, a local social system that is

[29] WILLIS, A. SUTTON and JIVI KOLAJA, 'The Concept of Community', Rural Sociology, 25, 1960

[30] Ibid., p. 197

[31] G.A. HILLERY, Communal Organizations, Chicago, Chicago U.P., 1969 p.4

[32] STACEY, M. 'The Myth of Community Studies', British Journal of Sociology, 20, 1969

worthy of sociological attention. She does not want to call this local social system a 'community' for the latter, she feels, is a non-concept. In other words, Stacey claims that the definitional debate about community is something more: it represents a much more serious conceptual disagreement about whether the community is a geographical area, or a sense of belonging, or non-work relationships and so on. Instead, sociologists should concentrate on institutions and their inter-relations in specific localities. Stacey is not concerned whether a locality is isolated or not. She writes, for example, that 'the consequences for the social relations within a locality of changes introduced from outside have after all produced some interesting studies'.[33] Stacey's approach brings rigour to the field and she writes that it is possible to talk with some certainty about' (i) the establishment and maintenance of a local social system; (ii) local conditions where no such system can be expected; (iii) some circumstances under which an existing system might be modified or destroyed; (iv) certain interrelations between systems and their parts; (v) the interaction of local and national systems'.[34]

Stacey's concept of a 'local social system' will be empirically varied, because the nature and configuration of the interrelations of social institutions are diverse. Rarely will there be a completely interrelated social system, with all institutions present. In any given locality it is likely, as she says, that 'there will either be no local social system, or some kind of partial local social system'.[35]

[33] Ibid., p. 139

[34] Ibid., p. 139

[35] Ibid., p. 141

Stacey does not intend that the 'complete local social system' should be open to the same sort of objections as the concept of 'community' or, for that matter, 'folk society'. She argues that it is theoretically possible to list systematically the social institutions which might be present in a locality with all their interconnections. This can be regarded as a model, and against it the empirically observed presence and absence of institutions and connections can be plotted. Another significant aspect of Stacey's argument is her insistence on the inclusion of time as a dimension -' ..... the state of system at a given moment in time will be considered and the temporal conditions which have led to that state and what may follow will be indicated'.[36]

She concludes her paper with thirty-one interrelated propositions about local social systems. Two examples of the kind of propositions about local social systems she makes are given, because they seem appropriate to this study:

Proposition 9: 'Where any substantial institutions are greatly changed the system cannot work as it did previously, as in Banbury where new economic relations were introduced'.[37]

Proposition 18: 'In localities where there is a local social system there will also be elements of other social systems present in the locality, i.e. the local social system will not totally encompass all institutions and relationships present, e.g. migrants bring with them nationally legitimated rights to vote for local political bodies'.[38]

[36] Ibid. p. 141

[37] Ibid. p. 142

[38] Ibid., pp. 143 - 4

Central to Stacey's case is her argument that because the totality of social relations may not be found in the locality, this does not necessarily mean that there is nothing worth studying. The 'eclipse' of the local system is highly unlikely, though these propositions make it clear that it is going to be necessary to consider some social processes working from outside the locality.

2.4 Rural Communities

Against the background of theoretical concepts of Community, there follows a summary of recent studies on the functioning of rural communities.

Over the last forty years a number of studies of villages as communities have appeared, written by authors trained initially in a variety of disciplines: anthropologists, social anthropologists, geographers, economists, as well as a few who have described themselves from the outset as sociologists. The ground was broken by two anthropologists, Arensberg and Kimball, in 'Family and Community in Ireland'.[39] Whilst this is now dated in many respects,it is useful in showing how closely-knit a group of small farmers can be in their economic and social life, politics and kinship. Village communities of this type may be met today in the more remote parts of the British Isles but their number is declining rapidly under modern influences and no Northumbrian village fits the pattern.

Again from Ireland comes a description of rural life by Mogey, 'Rural Life in Northern Ireland'[40] which gives an account of life in rural Northern Ireland since the late 1700's,but includes also a contemporary description of a village of 44 inhabited houses, Hilltown, which a century before had almost twice this number. The author

[39] ARENSBERG, J. and KIMBALL, A. Family and Community in Ireland. London 1940.

[40] MOGEY, J.M. Rural life in Norther Ireland. London 1947

describes the conditions under which people lived in and around the village: the farmers, farm labourers, pensioners and retired folk and the remaining eleven workers, the carpenters, quarrymen and so on. The living conditions of individual households are examined.

In chronological order of publication, the next important piece of research on rural communities was done in Mid-Wales by Rees, whose 'Life in a Welsh Countryside'[41] was based on a parish of three hamlets and scattered farmsteads, a pattern more typical of the Celtic-based Welsh countryside than that of England or, in particular, Northumberland. He found social structure did not rely upon an institutional focus outside the home. Instead, he records firm opposition to any form of centralisation. The family and kinship group was woven directly into the culture without the mediation of community or other major institutional focus.

Rees's work in Wales was continued with Elwyn Davies and others.[42] Difficulties of establishing and maintaining contact with the rest of Wales and England determined that the way of life of people in this remote area had changed little during recent decades: church-going was still important, co-operation within the family and between neighbours easy and natural, community organisations were largely ignored and recreation was home-based.

One of the first major sociological studies of a modern English village was that of Gosforth, by Williams, another Welshman. 'The Sociology of an English Village' describes in intimate detail the everyday life of people living in a parish in West Cumberland which was undergoing change brought about in a variety of ways, from a number of directions and several causes, including employment in nearby Windscale.

[41] REES, A.D. Life in a Welsh Countryside. Cardiff. 1950

In spite of this 'foreign' industrial activity Gosforth was probably as typical an English rural parish as one could find: remote, medium-size, 700 inhabitants, most residents locally born, a total population declining since 1870, local employment predominantly farming. Williams studied the parish and not only the village cluster. Not surprisingly, the village folk turned out to be different in a number of respects from the country folk: fewer were engaged in farming occupations but a high proportion had links with farming by blood relationship or lapsed employment in farming. But, in contrast with conditions in Wales, whatever their source of livelihood, Williams found a definite bond linking the people of village and parish. Internal feuds and dissensions were noticeable, but in spiteof these the survey yielded much evidence of a sense of community. Information of local events passed round the village in the traditional English manner through gossip carried by tradesmen,customers at the local shop or through relatives and neighbours. Perhaps because of the varied economic activities of the inhabitants of Gosforth, Williams was able to describe a relatively rich social life, listing 31 formal organisations from the Agricultural Society to the British Legion, political societies to youth groups. Superimposed on, or integrated with, this external pattern of social relationships he found the activities of each family were 'enmeshed in a network of relationships based on consanguinity and proximity'.[44]

Professor Williams' second study, 'A West Country Village: Ashworthy' describes a 'truly rural' community in a part of south Devon which has experienced outward migration for a century. He brings out the fact that the system is a dynamic one where work people and families move

[44] WILLIAMS, W.M. The Sociology of an English Village. London 1956

from the farm, die, change their jobs; all the time there was a continuing rural way of life which was stable, traditional and highly resistant to economic and social change.

Williams directed his attention especially to farming communities. Frankenberg in 'Village on the Border' focused on a village where farming was relatively unimportant: a village of about 600 population struggling to survive as a community against the pressures of the outside world and against the enticement and distraction of all the recreations open to individuals today which militate against organised social activity. Frankenberg refers to the assumption frequently made that if a village is isolated geographically it ought to be a united village. But he implies that no village is completely isolated today: each cannot help being part of a greater whole being linked by mass communications and public services, school system, adult social extra-village linkages, shopping deliveries and expeditions and, above all,by work. Through their workmates who live in many places, villagers now develop interests outside the village. which they may or may not share with the rest of the family or with friends and acquaintances in the village. For instance, suggests Frankenburg, in a working-class family father may share with his son an interest in the fortunes of the nearby town's football club which takes them both out of the village every Saturday afternoon and may keep them in town for the evening. In a professional or middle-class family greater personal mobility given by the ownership of a car will allow the whole family, but especially the husband and the wife, to share social, educational, cultural and recreational activities of all kinds with other commuters, with residents in other villages and with townspeople and particularly those met during the course of employment.

Frankenberg found that the extra-village associations of those who worked elsewhere provided a major division in village social life because 'the women still remain tied to the village both by residence and by their work'.[46] This may have been because the village seemed isolated and the villagers felt that it was so but, as Frankenberg points out, the isolation of his village was far from absolute. It was part of a valley and 'socially a network of kinship and friendship ties spread from one end of the valley to the other and beyond'.[47]

In 'Westrigg, The Sociology of a Cheviot Parish,' Littlejohn examines amongst other matters, the role of the farm worker in relation to his work for the farmer. He demonstrates that the farm worker's family today has usually nothing to do with the farm; their life is quite as separate from the man's work as is that of any other worker, artisan or professional. Contrary to tradition and belief, they now have little to do with the farming way of life. The farm worker is related to the farm solely as an employee and to his family solely as a father, and the roles are kept strictly separate. His wife and older children rarely help in the hay or harvest field to supplement a meagre income. Neither is he dependent upon the farm for food in kind. With more money, shorter working hours and, usually, increased personal mobility, he looks to town for entertainment and for all kinds of service including the purchase of food.

Littlejohn found that his parish had been transformed during this century by the combined effect of several processes: reorganisation of local government, extension of the rights of citizenship, adjustment of employer-employee relationships, development of public transport and an increase in the range and amount of consumer goods available for purchase. As a result, institutions which administer to certain needs have changed. Increased use of money and increase in the flow of

[46] Ibid. p. 54

[47] Ibid. p. 51

consumer goods into the parish has reduced the exchange of goods and services among the parishioners locally. Higher wages, more leisure time and availability of transport have enabled rural dwellers to participate in town activities. Relationships among individuals resemble much more those of any urban group than they did a few decades ago.

In Westrigg an awareness of 'social class' seemed to have become more noticeable than an appreciation of 'community' and several of Littlejohn's chapters are concerned with the examination of social class in his parish - as it affected individuals, the family and groups and organisations.

Studies of rural communities in Britain have tended to emphasise the differences between people who live in villages and those who live in towns; their work, play, social class and social relationships, kinships, greater neighbourliness or greater bickering. In Westrigg, by contrast, the author brings out the strong similarities between those who work in towns and those who work in the countryside. The involvement in networks outside the immediate family or neighbourhood group in this particular parish made the local community less an area of common life than 'an area within which the individual chooses his associations, subject to such barriers as are imposed by social class or physical distance. The people around him are no longer all actual neighbours but only possible neighbours'.[49]

A marked feature of post-war Britain has been the overspill of town workers from sizeable urban centres into nearby rural settlements. Under planning control this has taken the form of infilling and the development of estates, small and large, peripheral to many loosely-formed villages. The compounding of old and new houses, older and young families, locally-born and newcomers has created hybrid communities

[49] Ibid p. 155

for which the word village in the old sense is a misnomer. New organisations have been established but new tensions created. In many places new leaders have emerged but old ones still cling to traditional roles.

In London's rural-urban fringe, in Hertfordshire, Pahl in his 'Urbs in Rure' found that 'a housewife who lives in a rural area, but who does all her shopping in a neighbouring town, may be participating in urban life as much as another housewife living in a peripheral urban estate'.[50] This sharing of urban provisions - work, services, entertainment and so on - by people living in, and believing themselves part of, a village community is highlighted by Pahl. At the same time, his study also points to the social and spatial segregation which can be seen building up in many commuter villages today. Crichton, in her 'Commuters' Village,' similarly found that 'recent changes in the size and shape of her village, Stratfield Mortimer, 7 miles from Reading and 40 miles from London, have discouraged integration'.[51] More recently Popplestone has discussed the role of the voluntary association in bringing newcomers and older residents together in these 'expanded rural settlements' as he describes them. He sees these voluntary associations: (i) as substitutes for the kin groups many newcomers have left behind, (ii) helping individuals to learn the new norms necessary in the new environment, (iii) modifying conflict between newcomers and local residents through the overlapping of ties formed in different associations and (iv) helping newcomers and villagers to become identified with the village and village affairs'.[52]

[50] PAHL, R.E. Urbs in Rure, London 1964

[51] CRICHTON, R. Commuters' Village. London 1964

[52] POPPLESTONE, G. Planning for the Changing Countryside. London 1967

In 'Communities in Britain' Frankenberg brings together findings from some of the more important field studies recently made in the British Isles, including some of those named in this chapter, with the addition of studies of a mining village, Ashton, a small industrial town, Glossop and a small agricultural town, Banbury. [53] He then goes on to describe communities in conurbations and on urban housing estates. In his final chapters the author tries to develop a theory of social development aimed at producing an understanding of the differences between the truly rural and less rural communities in Britain. To help in this, he constructs a 'morphological continuum as a model against which to measure the accuracy of our knowledge of real social life in different parts of Britain'.[54] The model, an ordered inventory of the elements which go to make up a community, comprises 25 items drawn from the individual community studies and deals with, amongst other matters, social fields, role conflict, type of economy, division of labour, complexity, status, networks, and the changing pattern of social redundancy.

The studies used by Frankenberg for his analysis were produced by other authors for other purposes with different emphases and are not strictly comparable; he has arranged his summaries, as far as possible, in roughly similar orders: General description, achieved roles, social class and social status, sources of conflict and of change etc. He has had to leave gaps but his models do help one to understand more fully the societies he redescribes in the first part of his study, and emphasise the complexity of communities in general and the village community in particular.

53 FRANKENBERG, R. Communities in Britain. London 1966

54 Ibid p. 78

To sum up, it would seem that apart from a very few exceptions 'all the rest of us inhabit several communities and for a growing number the territory-based community either scarcely exists or is not the most important. We have most of us a strong nuclear family and in some cases a wider family system in good order; we have our friends and fellow darts players. We have our neighbourhood ... but our colleagues are more important to us than our neighbours. Our sub-cultures are occupational not locality based'.[55] There is evidence that the new pattern of community-relationships with its plurality of circles and centres is developing rapidly with increase in personal mobility. 'Rural communities can be isolated as separate systems for the purpose of academic study, but this is an increasingly unreal exercise'.[56] In fact, many an area commonly referred to as rural may be more urban than rural in all the more important aspects which go to make up the way of life of the individuals who comprise its resident population.

Recent studies emphasise the metamorphosis which has taken place during the last couple of decades. It is still fashionable in certain quarters to speak and write, nostalgically, of 'the village community'. The users of the expression seem to be 'past middle-age, usually middle-class, of local or at least rural origin and well-enough-off financially to be able to supplement their local community endeavour with extra-village contacts and associations. They are rarely young and never working-class. They are being rapidly outnumbered in more and more 'rural communities' by newcomers who are younger than they, have usually urban backgrounds, are more vocal, highly mobile and have little regard

[55] MACK, J.A. Community in Town and Countryside. Report of the Fifth British National Conference on Social Work. London 1964.

[56] PAHL, R.E. The Rural-Urban Continuum, Sociolgia Rurales, Vol. 6 Nos. 3-4 London 1966 p. 316

for the nostalgia of older residents who vote against street lighting in the village because of its urban connotations or object to the surfacing of a muddy, previously unmade road or track because it takes away its rural character'.[57]

2.5 Conclusion

Rural communities can develop a way of life separate, distinct and more worthwhile in many respects than is possible under urban living, but the village community as it has been understood in the past, functioning as a separate entity, seems to be disappearing. This conclusion contradicts much of the survey work referred to. It can be argued that during the 1960's and 70's changes have been so rapid and so profound that published rural social surveys do not reflect the 1980 way of country living.

It is against this dynamic background that the place of the school in the village has been investigated in later chapters of this study.

[57] WYLIE, L. Village in the Vanclose. Cambridge Mass. 1961

CHAPTER 3

VILLAGE SCHOOLS SINCE THE WAR

3.1 The National Situation

3.1.1. Introduction

The focus of this study is now upon the post-war years, and the emphasis shifts from the general to the particular: from the academic to the political and legislative.

This chapter reviews the position of village schools in a national context, looks briefly at their educational contribution, considers their situation in Northumberland LEA and makes reference to their role in a comparable European region.

3.1.2. The Vulnerability of Village Schools

School closure is not a recent phenomenon. The ebb and flow of rural populations, the various reorganisations of state education and the inconsistencies of the birth rate have led to closures and amalgamations over the last 100 years.

An example of the fickleness of the school roll is again provided by Newbrough:

Table 2

Year	1818	1860	1865	1890	1932	1939	1967	1972	1973	1974	1982
School Roll	15	8	70	200	140	65	96	142	115	65	40

These figures reflect the fall in the birth rate in England and Wales since the 1964 peak of 876,000 births. At national level the ebb and flow of school population is shown in Figure 1 which, with a datum point of 1979, provides not only a current guide but also a series of projections concerning possible school rolls:

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PUPIL NUMBERS

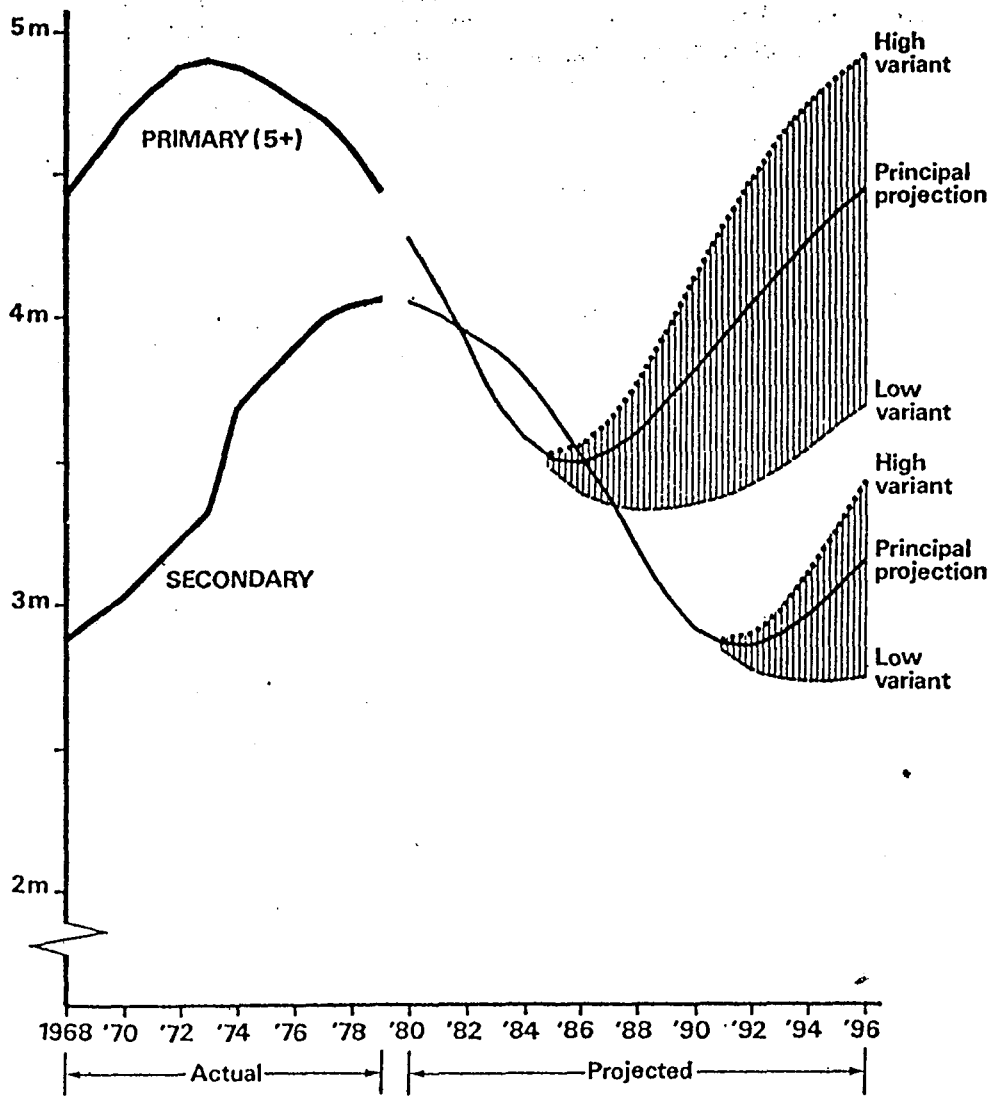


Figure 1. Source: University of Aston in Birmingham, 1981.

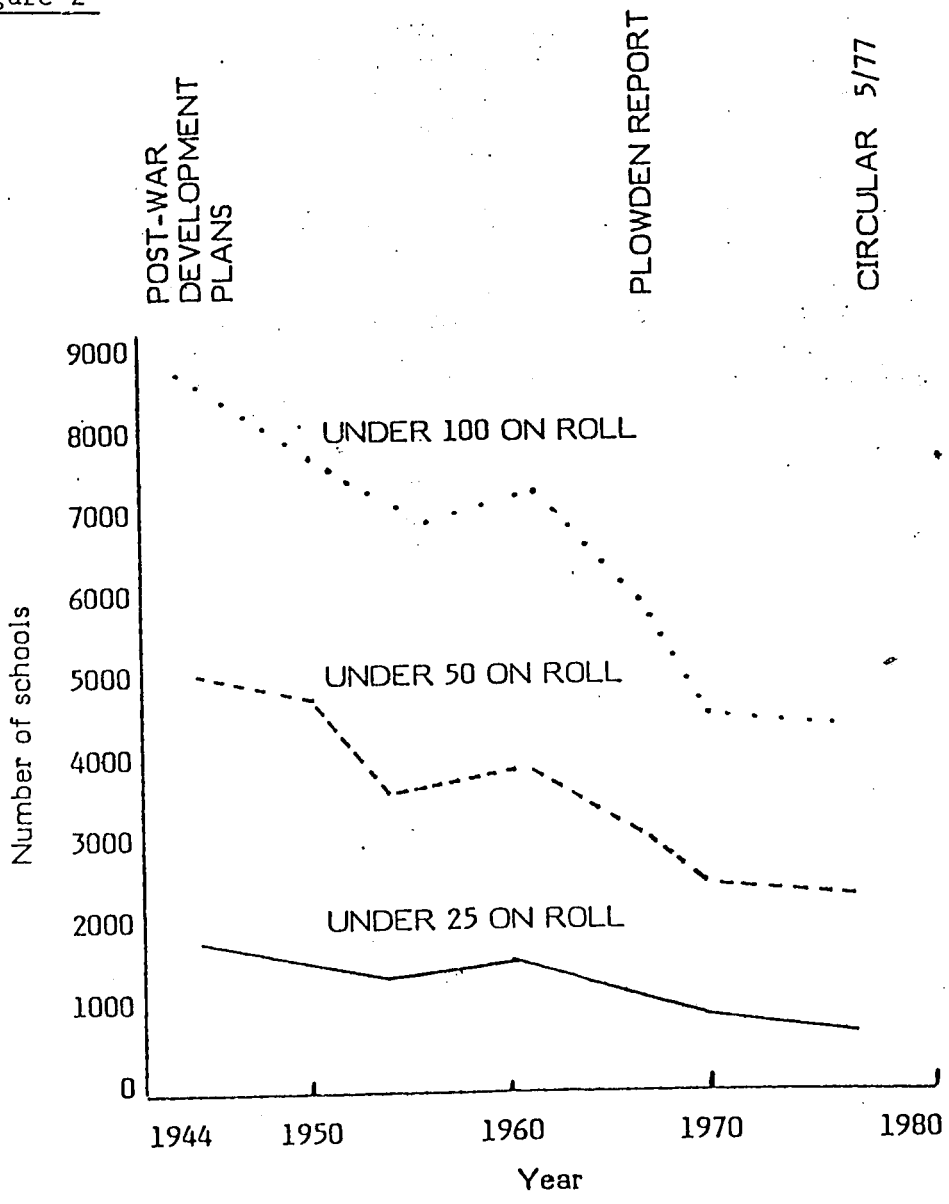
Government estimates suggest that in four years time there will be a total of three million surplus school places in England and Wales. About a quarter of this figure will represent places in primary schools. This is equivalent to over 1,000 primary schools.

In Northumberland, where education is organised on a three-tier system, first schools contain only the five to nine age range, and are consequently particularly at risk at a time of declining numbers.

In the past four years, the total number of school pupils in the county has fallen by 1600. It is estimated that the numbers will have fallen by a further 1500 to 49,900 by 1984.

Nationally, the closure of small schools has accelerated since the second world war. Reliable figures are available only from 1967, but enquiries made nationally suggest that over 2,000 village schools have closed since 1945. Figure 2 illustrates the downward trend:

Figure 2 [59]



59 McCOMBIE, F. (Ed.) Educational Disadvantage and the North-East of England. Northumberland College of Higher Education. 1977.

3.1.3. Post-war Pressures

It is possible to pinpoint a number of reasons for the disappearance of village schools over the past 40 years:

a. The 1944 Education Act prejudiced the future of hundreds of small schools when all-age schools catering for the five to fourteen age range were reorganised as primary and secondary schools.

b. The Plowden Report was published in 1967. In a chapter on 'Education in Rural Areas' [60] six recommendations were made including one that schools with an age range of 5 to 11 should normally have at least three classes, each covering two age groups. This implied a minimum number of sixty children. Over 6,000 village schools in England and Wales were put at risk by this recommendation.

c. In DES Circular 5/77 [61] the Department of Education and Science asked local education authorities to make the most realistic assessment possible of future school population trends in their own areas, and then in consultation with the governors of voluntary schools to examine systematically the educational opportunities offered to children in their schools, and to consider how the premises, both buildings and sites, might best be used.

d. DES Circular 2/81 [62] tightened the screw by encouraging LEA's to speed up the reduction of surplus school places brought about by falling rolls.

Essentially, schools close when they cease to be viable in terms of numbers of pupils.

'Viable' is the key word. Some LEAs contemplate closing schools when numbers fall below twenty, forty or sixty pupils.

[60] PLOWDEN, Children in their Primary Schools. HMSO 1967

[61] D.E.S. Falling Numbers and School Closures. Circular 5/77 HMSO 1977.

[62] D.E.S. Circular 2/81 HMSO 1981

Some feel that single-teacher and two-teacher schools are undesirable. Northumberland does not use guide lines of this sort, preferring to look at each school individually.

3.2 Reasons for Closing Schools

When it is proposed that a village school should be closed because of declining numbers, the reasons most commonly advanced are educational, economic and social:

a. Children can lack peer group stimulus. Older children in particular will experience this. Most of their companions will be younger and so there will be little horizontal or vertical companionship:
'What stimulus from peers can there be for the very small number of children in each age group in a small village school? If we look at the eight year olds, say, and we find that there is only one boy in that age group and that the age group above consists of two girls, we can see that there are severe limitations on the kind of social association and stimulus that is available to the children. I think we must acknowledge that a number of children of like age must provide a stimulus socially, and that where this doesn't exist there is real disadvantage'[63].

b. The curriculum in a small school is likely to be limited:
' - it will be difficult to provide a sufficiently challenging curriculum for the older pupils who may become, as one witness suggested 'unwilling veterans' unless an additional teacher is appointed or substantial help is given by peripatetic teachers'[64].

c. Teaching a wide age and ability range is a daunting task. In most village schools, personalised learning is required for considerable parts of the curriculum:

[63] BECKWITH, I. (Ed.) The Country Child. Centre for the Study of Rural Society, Lincoln. 1973

[64] Plowden. op cit p. 177

'The pressure in education lies in the appreciation that you cannot teach the same thing in the same way at the same time, to a group of children of widely different ability'[65].

d. In a classroom where a few children spend a lot of time with one teacher, personality problems can arise:

'The fact that a teacher knows a child well is an advantage, but on the other hand the aspirations and ideas of the teacher may be limited by his environment, and he may therefore be of little help to the child'[66].

e. Children may encounter difficulty in adjusting to a larger establishment when they transfer to their middle school:

'A small school cannot give children that essential wider view of the world. It cannot introduce them gradually to the sort of environment they will encounter and have to deal with for most of their lives'[67].

f. For the teacher, the professional constraints of a small school are apparent. The intellectual stimulus of colleagues is limited, it is not easy to attend in-service courses because of teaching commitments, and absences due to illness can lead to a crisis when this means that perhaps 50% of the children are without a teacher. In counties like Northumberland, the headship of a village school has been traditionally a 'staging post' in a teacher's career structure; this has led to rapid turnover of staff and a lack of continuity. Now that promotion prospects in the profession have diminished, there is the equal risk of staleness and frustration amongst rural teachers:

[65] EMBLING, J.G. Schools and Educational Technology. London 1976

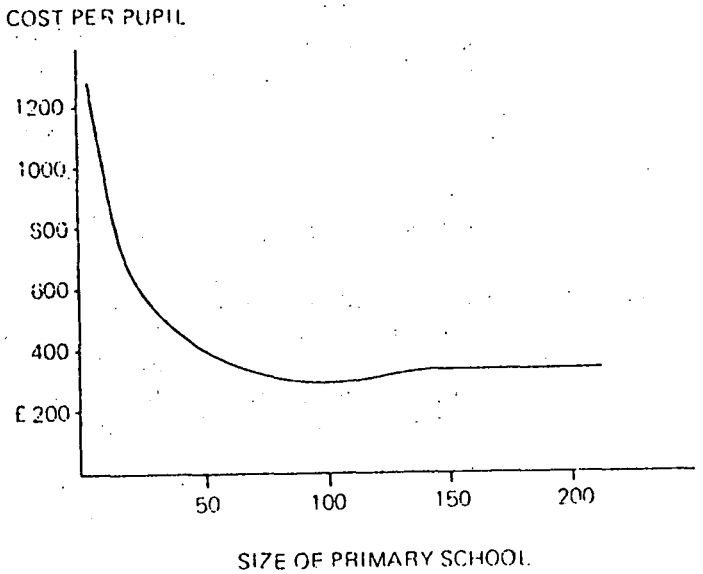
[66] JONES, H. (Ed.) Education in Rural Areas. Centre for Information on Educational Disadvantage. Manchester 1976.

[67] ROGERS, R. Schools Under Threat. London 1979

'Small rural schools can be among the dullest and most dispiriting'[68].

g. There can be a lack of resources, and poor buildings and facilities in small schools. Northumberland and Cumbria provide more generously for their rural schools than many LEAs, but this does mean that the unit cost per child, compared with larger schools in these authorities, is high:

Figure 3 Unit costs in Cumbria LEA (1979) [69]



3.3 Reasons for Keeping Open Schools

Reasons advanced for keeping open small schools, generally run counter to those already outlined in 2 i:

a. Small schools offer personal, all-round education, which equates to a family situation:

[68] GITTINS, Primary Education in Wales HMSO 1968

[69] ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY COUNCILS. Report on Education. London 1979

'In the small schools studied, a style is identified, demonstrably acceptable to teacher and pupil alike. In the very evident presence there of cohesiveness and satisfaction, and the approximation of cognitive standards to all other schools, the small school must be regarded as offering a very desirable learning and social environment'[70].

b. Small groups permit children to become more involved in the educational process:

'The proportion of participants was three to twenty times as great in the small schools as in the largest school. Furthermore, a much larger proportion of the small-school children held positions of importance and responsibility in the behaviour settings they entered'[71].

c. Educational standards in small schools are not lower than in large schools:

'There are no differences in the measured reading attainments of children in 2-teacher schools and of children in larger schools'[72].

d. The curriculum of small schools is not impoverished:

'One begins to savour something of the excitement, the glorious spontaneity, the wealth of experience provided in the typical infant class in the small 2-teacher schools in Cheshire. A somewhat similar situational approach is also observable at the junior stage, with cross-linking and cross-fertilisation of various subjects'[73].

e. There is a special quality attached to education in a village school. It is possible, perhaps, to talk of a 'rural curriculum', embracing all that is good in the countryside, and conveying to children a love of,

[70] EMONDS, E.L. and BESSAI, F. Small Schools. London 1977

[71] BARKER, R. AND GUMP, P.V. Big School, Small School. California 1964

[72] NASH, R. Schooling in Rural Societies. London 1980

[73] EDMONDS. Op Cit.

and a loyalty to their birthplace:

> ' One factor has increasingly been identified as crucial to the ultimate survival of the village as a community. It is above all the school which is felt to embody the idea of the village as something alive and enduring'[74].

f. Village schools are not deprived of good teachers:

> 'Enterprising teachers, who want to try fresh ideas, often prefer headships in a country school, with responsibility for a class'[75].

g. Far from offering restricted peer stimulus, small schools offer relationships which replicate the nature of relationships pertaining in rural areas outside school. To insist on horizontal peer group association is to deny rural culture and to impose artificial urban values:

> 'Rural friendships can be seen to be of a vertical kind based on kinship networks'[76].

h. Schumacher's 'Small is Beautiful' argument, originally conceived as a commercial and industrial principle, can be extended to the learning situation:

> 'Work should be organised so that the basic unit is a small group of about four to twenty people. Groups of more than twenty tend naturally to split up into smaller cliques; while there is also evidence to show that the maximum sized unit which can be managed effectively is twenty'[77].

i. It is argued by local authorities that small schools of less than twenty pupils can cost twice as much per pupil to run as larger schools.

[74] THE TIMES (Ed.) Village Schools Revalued. London. September 1978

[75] PLOWDEN. Op. Cit p. 476

[76] NASH. Op. Cit. p. 51

[77] SCHUMACHMER, C. The End of an Era Calls for New Departures. Scott Bader Monograph. London 1977.

This is, however, only part of the story. The cost of providing an educational presence in an area should be calculated in broader terms than economic ones. Also, in the long term the consequences of a school closure can cost more than keeping a school open:

> 'Rural communities take less out of the public purse than urban areas - a difference of about 10%, so that small communities, making few demands on social security, libraries, social services, commuter rail subsidies etc., may feel entitled to their "expensive" village school'[78].

j. 'Bussing' of young children to school in another village can be a contentious issue. Safety, stress and fatigue are matters of concern to parents:

> 'Some research which I published twenty years ago, based on nearly 1,000 children from 57 primary schools in Devon, indicated that long school journeys (and especially bus journeys) had deleterious effects on social and emotional adjustment. This direct effect on the child is compounded by the effect on village life of the loss of the school'[79].

k. The social life of a village suffers when its school is closed. Lady Plowden, whose 1967 Report precipitated the closure of many schools, seemed to have recanted on this issue some years later:

> 'Is it right to take the heart out of a community by taking away the children, Pied Piper like, thus losing the bond which is created within and between families through a common interest in the school, involving parents and even grandparents, which is both socially and educationally desirable?'[80]

[78] CLARK, L. The Decline of Rural Services. London 1978

[79] LEE, T. Test of the hypothesis that School Reorganisation is a Cause of Rural Depopulation. Durham 1961

[80] PLOWDEN, Lady. Letter to the Times. London. August 1978

3.4 Case Studies - Participant Observation

During the period of the investigation, participant-observation was undertaken in six 2-teacher schools, and in three larger schools which serve as 'hosts' to children whose own schools had been closed. The aims in each school were:

(1) To assess the breadth of curriculum

(2) To trace whether it might lay claim to be a 'rural curriculum'.

(3) To find out what extra-curricular activities were on offer.

(4) To judge the mode of teaching; whether formal or informal.

(5) To discover the degree of parental participation

The overall object was to assess the educational merits of larger rural 'host' schools as compared with two-teacher village schools.

The schools were distributed equally between three District Council areas in Northumberland, Hexham, Morpeth and Alnwick are market towns. Two days were spent in each of their first schools. In each of the six village schools, one day was spent.

The method of investigation employed, that of participant-observation, has not until recently been favoured greatly by social psychologists. Studies by McCall[81] and Becker[82] have not been followed up vigorously. Nash[83] has, however, undertaken disciplined work using the repertory grid technique, and several years experience gained in using comparable systems, together with Flanders' categories, in Northumbrian schools, with the co-operation of teachers, suggested that it was a worthwhile method to employ in this case study.

A summary of the findings is given in table 3 on page 62.

The subjects or activities offered by the nine schools were made up of the following, sometimes with a different nomenclature:

[81] McCALL, G.J. and SIMMONS, J.L. (Eds.) Issues in Participant Observation New York 1969

[82] BECKER, H. S., Sociological Work. New York 1970

[83] NASH, R. Classroom Observed. London 1973

English, including drama, reading and poetry

Geography

History

Science or nature study

Mathematics

Religious Studies

Physical Education and Games

Music

Movement Education or Dance

Art and Craft

In no instance was there evidence of a rural curriculum, particular to one school and linking that school to its community culturally, socially and philosophically.

The breadth of curriculum varied little between schools. Individual schools had their strengths and weaknesses. Music, Science and Movement Education were taught with greater expertise and insight, in two instances by specialist teachers, in the 'host' schools. Basics like reading and mathematics tended to be pursued more assiduously in the village classroom.

The methods favoured were formal almost throughout. Informal situations, where children were responsible to an appreciable extent for their own learning, were identified in two schools only, these being in villages.

The degree of parental involvement tended to reflect the attitude of the headteacher, whilst extra-curricular activities did not seem to depend upon size or geographical location.

In general, then, there was little to choose educationally between the schools in this small sample. The 'host' schools offered 'more of the same in larger classes'. Admittedly this was not a rigorous

exercise, being based, as Nash reflects, on an approach which has disadvantages[84]. It does, however, raise doubts about some of the educational reasons advanced in favour of closing the small schools. It seems possible that the approach to school closures has been unduly dogmatic.

Table 3 Analysis of Curricula in Nine Northumbrian Schools

District	School	No. of teachers	Average No. in each class	No. of subjects/activities offered	No. of extra-curricular activities	Methods formal/informal	Degree of parent participation
Tynedale	Hexham Sele F	8	32	10	1	F	High
	Lowgate First	2	15	9	-	F	High
	Newbrough C. of E.	2	16	9	-	F	Moderate
Castle Morpeth	Morpeth Chantry	8	31	9	1	F	Moderate
	Longhorsley C. of E.	2	20	9	2	Inf.	High
	Cambo C. of E.	2	11	8	-	F	Moderate
Alnwick	Alnwick First	6	33	9	-	F	Moderate
	Embleton First	2	13	10	2	F	High
	Eglingham First	2	11	8	-	Inf.	Moderate

[84] NASH, R. Op. Cit.

3.5 - Alternatives to Closing Village Schools

3.5.1. Procedure for Closing Schools

The procedure laid down for closing a school is embodied in the 1980 Education Act.

In brief, if the LEA intends to close an existing county school it must publish the proposals publicly, and submit a copy to the Secretary of State for Education.

Once the LEA's proposals have been published there must be a period of two months during which objections can be made. When the two months are up, the LEA must forward to the Secretary of State copies of all objections submitted, together with its own observations. This has to be done within one month of the end of the two month objection period.

The Secretary of State can decide within the two month objection period to take the decision into his own hands, whether or not objections are made or sustained.

If there are no objections, the LEA can be left to make its own decision. If there are objections, the Secretary of State cannot leave the LEA to make the decision, but is obliged to approve or reject the proposals, or in consultation with the LEA approve them with such modifications as he considers desirable.

Any proposal by the LEA or governors to close a voluntary school continues to need the approval of the Secretary of State. The proposers must first consult the LEA, then publish the proposals and

submit a copy to the Secretary of State.

The procedure for objecting is the same as for county schools except that objections must be sent direct to the Secretary of State within the two month period.

3.5.2. Some of the Alternatives

When rolls fall, there are alternatives to closing a school:

a. Northumberland LEA has shown interest in the 'federation' or 'clustering' scheme pioneered by Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. This unites a group of small schools administratively and philosophically under one headteacher. There is one central school with three or four smaller ones as annexes. Each annex loses its head, but the village retains an educational presence.

Federation provides advantages for children and teachers. Schools which could not survive are kept open, resources can be shared and a new career structure opens up for the small-school teacher. The Cambridgeshire federation possesses a mini-bus for transporting materials and teachers between schools, which are generally only two miles apart. The children are bussed to other schools only for occasional events.

This sort of scheme depends on the approval and on-going support of the LEA, the agreement of heads and teachers, and the willingness of parents to become more involved in the life of their schools.

b. A more radical concept is that of parent-teacher co-operatives. This implies community-operated alternative schools, ideally funded in whole or in part from state funds. A parallel can be drawn with housing associations. Madingley School near Cambridge provides an example. Closed by the LEA as educationally and economically unviable, the parents bought the school in 1978

for about £40,000, and achieve the annual running costs by money-raising events, donations and charitable grants.

c. Some communities have suggested topping-up funds whereby an LEA continues to fund an economically unviable school to the level it would have to do for an average school. Extra finance required to keep the school running effectively would come directly from the community via the parish rate, the parents' association or a trust fund. Hertfordshire permits parents to pay for books, equipment and ancillary help so that children can start school up to a year before the statutory minimum age, so increasing numbers.

d. Several authorities, including Northumberland, apply a limited discrimination policy towards small schools. Equipment, films and pictures are available on free loan from a teachers' centre, and capitation allowances are weighted in favour of the small school. Northamptonshire has a Small Schools' Enrichment Programme which has enabled seven small schools to build up a central pool of equipment including a heat-copier, cine camera and minibus. A comparable possibility is that of financial cross-subsidy, whereby all the costs of rural services in an area are taken together. Thus funding a high-cost rural school is lumped in with funding other essential services. In this way the high cost is 'absorbed' into the general low cost of rural, as compared with urban services.

3.5.3 Opposition to Closure

When an LEA proposes that a village school should be closed, experience has shown that reaction from affected communities is often immediate and positive.

At local level during 1981 and 1982, concerned parents, governors and villagers from Blanchland, Falstone, Beadnell, Bamburgh,

Embleton, Craster, Rennington and Lowgate all in Northumberland have attended meetings with officials from Northumberland LEA to discuss the situation of their schools.

Nationally and regionally there are organisations which make a case for the retention of small schools in general, and draw up guidelines which can be of assistance to specific pressure groups in their villages.

These organisations include ACE (the Advisory Centre for Education), CASE (Confederation for the Advancement of State Education), CPRE (Council for the Preservation of Rural England), DOVE (Defenders of Village Education), the Centre for Information and Advice on Educational Disadvantage, the Centre for the Study of Rural Society, the Centre for Village Studies, CARE (Cumbrian Association for Rural Education), the National Association for the Support of Small Schools and the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations.

At village level there are individuals like Graham Baxendale of Staffordshire and Jill Thorne of Oxfordshire, and organisations such as the Hardwicke School Action Group of Buckinghamshire and the Park School Campaign of Cambridgeshire that can offer relevant experience.

It would seem that the proposal to close a village school, however cogently argued, is a signal for communities to unite in opposition. This is a significant psychological element in the total discussion. It was borne in mind when forming the questionnaire used in this study.

3.6 The Local Perspective

3.6.1. Planning Since the War

The first post-war Development Plan for primary education in Northumberland was drawn up in the late forties in the light of circumstances prevailing at that time. Subsequently major changes in

government policy, and the population assumptions underlying the plan rendered much of it impracticable. This led to its revision in 1959.

The 1959 Education Development Plan concentrated on rural primary schools. It advocated the elimination of one-teacher schools and also threw doubt on the viability of two and three-teacher schools:

> 'The Plan proposes the discontinuance of a considerable number of very small schools, and the amalgamation of their pupils into larger schools. Only in four or five areas, from which it seems either totally impossible to get the children to school elsewhere, or if possible, only by imposing upon them an unreasonable travelling time, has the retention of one-teacher schools been proposed'[85].

The 1959 Plan provided a list of primary schools scheduled for closure and retention. Time, reorganisation and population factors have overtaken the recommendations, so that 23 years later Blanchland and Falstone which were scheduled to remain open have closed, while Chollerton, due to close, has in 1982 appointed a new head. Meanwhile Lowgate approaches quarter of a century of existing under the shadow of closure.

The 1959 Report also made a statement on bussing:

> 'The astonishing increase in the availability of motor transport since the war has created a new conception of distance. Comparatively few children are unused to quite long journeys. It would be entirely wrong to ignore this feature of modern life and, in planning the educational provisions of the present and the future, to adhere to ideas of distance which prevailed a generation ago.

[85] NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DEPT. Northumberland County Development Plan NCC. 1959

> In general it cannot be regarded as unreasonable for a child of primary school age to travel five miles or a journey time of half an hour to reach an appropriate school'[86].

The Plan had the effect of concentrating primary schools at fewer centres in Northumberland, and by 1966 had reduced the 1959 total from 189 rural primary schools to 151.

The Northumberland County Development Plan of 1967 indicated that this total was to fall to 126. No decrease was planned in market towns, the full reduction being scheduled for country areas. Whereas prior to 1959 only 14% of rural primary schools were located in the towns, full realisation of the 1967 Plan would have raised this to 21% Anticipating the 3-tier reorganisation of education, this Plan suggested that:

> 'To prevent possible hardship for their children it is to be expected that some families will move from remoter areas to centres where educational facilities are to be located. The natural trend towards greater concentration of population is thus likely to be emphasised'[87].

Coincidentally in 1965 a University of Newcastle report, 'Rural North-East England'[88] had pinpointed the less-favourable age structure of Northumberland's rural areas: an excess of older people, a low birth-rate and a high death-rate, the latter being a reflection of the emigration of young workers to the towns.

86 N.C.C. Op. Cit. P. 28

87 NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DEPARTMENT, Northumberland County Development Plan. NCC 1967

88 HOUSE, J.W. (Ed.) Rural North-East England, Newcastle 1965

The North-East study found no direct correlation between intensity of outward migration and the seriousness of local social problems. No single factor determining decisions to migrate was observable, but 72% of departures related to work, 25% to marriage and only 3% to education. Amongst those intending to move, employment was mentioned by 36%, better social services by 14%, better social amenities by 14%, better transport by 10% and better education by 10%.

The 1961 census showed that since 1951 about 80,000 more people had left the North-East region than had moved into it; this was equal to nearly 3% of the population. However there was no fall in the region's total population.

The Northumberland County Structure Plan of 1976 laid emphasis for the first time upon 'the overall quality of education', which it saw as being important to 'the long-term social and economic development of the County'. The Plan considered that 'the location and level of educational facilities are of particular importance in influencing the future distribution of population in terms of the ability to both retain and attract people and jobs'[89].

It is towards these important statements linking education and social well-being in rural Northumberland that the thrust of this enquiry is directed.

3.6.2. The Place of the School in the Village

In many respects the village school is seen as the focal point of a rural community. If it closes, then 'the heart goes out of the village'. The implication is that there is something about a small school which extends beyond its function as an educational institution.

89 NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DEPARTMENT. Northumberland County Structure Plan. NCC 1976

It is seen as a unifier, a symbol of community virility, a social catalyst. If it disappears, then village life is diminished. Clubs and societies decline, jobs and services are put at risk, people - especially young people - move away, and the quality of life is eroded.

There are many sources prepared to back this argument:

Local councillors see the matter as a rallying point for their electorate. The threat to Beadnell School in Northumberland is a case in point:

> 'Years ago the happiness of village life depended on the whim of the overlord. Now village life is being ruined by bureaucrats, as they want to close our village schools'[90].

Head teachers may be said to have a vested interest in the situation: 'What they (the LEA) are doing to country children is worse than killing off the seals. If parents don't fight now, they'll regret it for the rest of their lives'[91].

National politicians espouse the cause, though their commitment may be considered to be fragile:

> 'Parents throughout the country are fighting for what they consider to be their children's birthright - the right to be educated within the village community. And they are fighting in many cases for the survival of the village itself since, when the school is closed, the heart and soul of the village often goes with it'[92].

National organisations representing rural communities seem to be committed to the preservation of small schools:

> 'The village school is crucial to the survival of rural communities.

[90] SUMMER, R. Letter to Newcastle Journal. April 1982

[91] SCOTT, J.H. The Death of the Village School. The Teacher. May 1978

[92] ST. JOHN-STEVAS, N. Letter to the Times. August 1978

> Once the school closes, a village loses an important community facility and young families are encouraged to move away, with the result that other services, local employment and the very nature of the community are undermined:[93]

Above all, it is the Press which espouses the cause of the village school:

> 'One factor has increasingly been identified as crucial to the ultimate survival of the village as a community. It is not the rural bus, post office, shop or pub - important as all these can be in safeguarding a village's identity. It is above all the school which is felt to embody the idea of the village as something alive and enduring'[94].

Thus a spectrum of society can be seen to be persuaded that the village school is important to the vitality and functioning of rural communities.

3.7 Case Study - A Scandinavian Perspective on Rural Education

3.7.1. Introduction

At this point it seems appropriate to examine in some depth the response of other governments to the problems posed by declining rural services.

This case study examines aspects of village education in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. These countries were chosen because they have educational, historical, cultural and economic affinities with Northumberland, although they are more rural. The approach is selective, neither attempting to make a comparative study of education

[93] CLARK, D and SMITH, M (Eds.) The Deline of Rural Services. Report of the Standing Conference of Rural Community Councils. 1978.

[94] THE TIMES. Editorial. September 1978

in Northumberland and Scandinavia, nor evaluating their educational systems, but setting the focus clearly on key issues which these areas have in common.

3.7.2. The Rural Dimension in Scandinavia

Norway and Sweden have vast and remote northern areas extending beyond the Arctic Circle, with a harsh climate and long winter darkness. Although the population in these northern areas is sparse, most people live in small settlements, often with about twenty houses: only a few are more isolated, sometimes by preference. In the south of these countries and in Denmark the rural population is less scattered and isolated, so that conditions are more often comparable to those occurring in Northumberland.

The Scandinavian populations are small compared with this country - Norway about four million, Sweden eight million and Denmark five million - but the proportion that can be described as rural is larger. The rural vote is so influential that no major political party could ignore its interests, as much on educational as on economic issues.

In the first half of this century the rural population in Scandinavia was underprivileged. Rural schools in Norway and Sweden, and to a lesser extent Denmark, had poorer facilities and a more limited curriculum than urban schools. There was a determined political effort to improve conditions, and raising the educational standards of rural schools was seen as playing a leading role.

3.7.3. The Problem of Small and Widely Scattered Schools

The determination to raise the standards of rural schools was the expression of a principle which was regarded as fundamental, namely that there should be equal educational opportunity for all children.

The Scandinavian countries were consciously shaping their societies as democracies in which free discussion and widespread consultation were seen to be as important as political representation, and which could only be built on a firm educational foundation. The question of what to do about the rural schools was taken seriously. The discussion centred on the school covering the compulsory age range from seven to fifteen years, for there was no move to divide them into lower and upper parts on the lines of the Hadow reorganisation of all-age schools in Britain, or the corresponding division into primary and secondary stages in some parts of Europe. There has been no change in this respect, and rural schools in Scandinavia, with few exceptions, still cover the full compulsory age range.

However, when the drive to improve rural schools was taking place in Scandinavia,the rural population was declining, as it was in Britain and much of Europe. People were migrating into towns and cities in search of work and easier living conditions. Although there has been a small reverse flow in Scandinavia from the 1960's of people concerned about pollution of the environment and disenchanted with urban life, known as the 'green wave', the general trend continues.

In early discussions about improving schools the minimum size for a class was set at 25 children in all three countries. In the remote areas of Norway and Sweden a school could be retained if it had only one class, but wherever possible in those countries and in Denmark larger schools were created, if necessary by closing several small schools in a given area. The children had to be transported to the area schools, after their local schools had been closed. In Norway children having to travel long distances were compensated by having school on only three days a week. But the additional travel arising

from school closures was found to impose a double strain: on the children who had to make the long journeys, and on the parents who felt the loss of the children from the home environment. In the last two decades the policy has been reversed, and it has been decided to retain small schools whenever possible, especially in Denmark, because of the harm to communities when their schools have been closed. The close relationships between teachers, children and parents were lost; the families with children moved away.

Although there is not the same sense of community as it is suggested can be found in some villages in Britain, family ties are strong and so is the sense of belonging to a locality. If consideration was given to collecting children from several settlements into one school, the idea would be discussed with all those involved, and it would as a rule only be implemented if everyone agreed. 'Consultation from the beginning, with access to all relevant information, is regarded as an essential feature of the Scandinavian form of democracy'[95].

This enables all the local circumstances to be taken into account when considering any reorganisation of rural schools. In the most remote places a school may have to be kept open with only a handful of children, and giving an admittedly inferior education, because there is no alternative apart from boarding, to which there is strong resistance. In general, however, the earlier policy of reorganising schools into units of three or more classes, with the intention of providing a more 'efficient' education, has now given way to a policy of continuing local schools whenever it is feasible, and then striving to improve them.

[95] D'AETH, R. A Positive Approach to Rural Primary Schools. Cambridge. 1981.

3.7.4. Policy Based on Equal Opportunity, Social Interaction and Open Access

The notion that there should be equality of opportunity for children is accepted as a goal in all countries with a sufficiently developed economy, and in Scandinavia there is a conscious drive to implement such a policy effectively. However, there are differences both in how the phrase is interpreted, and in the ways in which it is expressed in practice in a country's system of education. This is illustrated by a statement on Swedish educational policy:

> 'Equal opportunity is understood to mean in Sweden to imply 'sameness' only in terms of social equality among individuals. It does not mean equal opportunity to compete, nor that everyone should receive the same or similar instruction. It tries to provide all individuals with the same general, fundamental civic skills, the ability to function as active, contributing members of society, a basic competence in communication, speaking, reading, writing, mathematics, a basic orientation in natural and social sciences and above all,a belief and confidence in their own worth and their own opportunities to continue a life-long learning process'.

It goes on to say:

> 'Access to education is an important aspect of equality. But it is not enough that educational opportunities exist. They should be within reach of the individual'[96].

In all the Scandinavian countries, the emphasis is on the all-round development of the individual to prepare for later education,

[96] MARKLIND, S. and BERGENDAL, G. Trends in Swedish Educational Policy. Stockholm. 1979

to increase personal satisfaction in living, and to enrich the society of the nation through his contribution and democratic participation. This can be further illustrated by quoting from the Danish Fokeskole Act 2, which states that:

> 'The aim of the Fokeskole is - in co-operation with parents - to give pupils a possibility of acquiring knowledge, skills, working methods and ways of expressing themselves which will contribute to the all-round development of the individual pupil. In all of its work the Folkeskole must try to create possibilities of experience and self-expression which allow pupils to increase their desire to learn, expand their imagination, and develop their ability for making independent assessments, evaluation and opinions. The Folkeskole shall prepare pupils for taking an active interest in their environment and for participation in decision-making in a democratic society, and for sharing responsibility for common problems. Thus, teaching and the entire daily life in school must be based on intellectual liberty and democracy'[97].

A similar outlook is evident in the relevant Act ('Concerning the Basic School') of 1969 and the Supplementary Act of 1979 that the purpose of compulsory education in Norway:

> 'is, in understanding of and collaboration with the home, to help give the pupils a Christian and moral upbringing, to develop their mental and physical abilities, and to give them a good general knowledge, so that they may become useful and

[97] DANISH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. The Act on the Folkeskole. Copenhagen 1976.

> self-reliant human beings both in their homes and in the community. The school shall further mental freedom and tolerance, and work for the creation of productive forms of co-operation between teachers and pupils and between home and school'[98].

Again, the same emphasis is on general education and on social integration for a democratic society, with the Norwegian prescription being also Christian.

'The stress in Scandinavia is on 'equality of educational provision' and not on 'equal opportunity to compete', and the distinction has far-reaching implications'[99]. Education which gives its main priority to allround social and personal development tends to imply that pupils should all have a common general education, should be treated similarly and not be awarded marks or compared with one another. Certainly assessment is not widely practised, nor given much emphasis at the end of schooling, although Sweden pays some attention to it in selecting students to train in science and other fields of importance to the national economy. It is a natural corollary that study is assumed to continue after the end of schooling, often part-time while in a job, or with full-time periods at a college or university after working for a while. It is also taken for granted that the provision of schools in rural areas should be as good as in towns and cities, despite the higher unit cost, because there would otherwise not be equality of educational opportunity.

[98] NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. Concerning the Basic School Oslo. 1968.

[99] D'AETH. Op Cit p. 29

3.7.5. Non-Competitive Schooling and Life-Long Education

A corollary to the Scandinavian stress on equality is that their approach to education in school is less competitive than in Britain. More emphasis is laid on all children having a general education in common, and less on the full development of individual abilities. The atmosphere is relaxed and discipline informal, and there is a notable lack of the anxiety caused in Britain by external school-leaving examinations. Education is assumed to continue after the end of compulsory schooling. For those who do not proceed to the upper secondary school, there is open access to universities after five years of work experience, and a large proportion of university students are over the age of twenty-five, many of them continuing to study on a part-time basis. There are no critical filters like the GCE 'O' and 'A' level examinations, and even according to the undemanding Scandinavian norms, there is little pressure on pupils at school to study hard or set their intellectual sights high.

Schooling does not begin until seven years of age, after which children learn to read and write, with help in small groups if it is needed. This reflects the view that children should grow up slowly and without pressure. The thought of starting formal learning before going to school, either in classes or via parents at home, is discouraged.

The age of compulsory education is from seven to fifteen or sixteen, covering the basic and lower secondary stages. Pupils normally remain at the same school, moving through it year by year with their age group and also normally with the same class teacher for the first six years (or in Sweden with one teacher for the first three years and with another for the second three years). Classes are of mixed ability with no streaming, except that pupils may choose certain optional

subjects during the last two or three years. In Denmark they can choose between basic and advanced courses in some subjects. Thus selection, where it occurs, is by pupil choice, though often with consultation. Similarly, those who wish may proceed from the lower to the upper secondary school. There are a few exceptions to the principle of voluntary selection, but they are insufficient to affect the relaxed atmosphere in schools. A corollary is that teachers cover most of the curriculum, which they have to follow closely, and there is hardly any specialist teaching until the last two or three years of compulsory schooling. The aim is to provide a basic general education for all children, free from undue pressure, after which there are opportunities to continue their studies as they wish. The whole outlook of schooling and continuing education is coloured by this aim, which in spite of financial and other difficulties seems to be realised in large measure.

The state schools are accepted readily by nearly all parents. Very few children go to private schools in Sweden and Norway; as a rule only if their parents are abroad or they do not fit into ordinary schools. In Denmark the situation is a little more open. A small number of parents send their children to private school, perhaps because of the stricter discipline, or to a Rudolf Steiner school; or they may be allowed to educate them at home. Private schools have to follow the same curriculum and other regulations as state schools, and the government pays a major proportion of their costs, so that fees are moderate. But the people who send their children to independent schools do not form a separate stratum in society.

The non-competitive Scandinavian approach to education raises several questions. Should the notion of 'equal opportunity' be

interpreted as meaning that schools should provide a common basis of general education for all pupils, after which they can diverge according to their interests and abilities? Or should it imply equal opportunity for children to express their various interests and abilities as they grow up, on the assumption that only if this is done can each individual's full potential for personal development be realised? The dilemma raises political as well as educational and social questions. The point worth making in this study is that Scandinavia has followed the first of the two interpretations, in contrast to Britain which has paid more attention to the second. While the non-competitive approach to providing a common general education should contribute to social integration, it may limit the freedom of choice open to parents and children - although there is little evidence of a feeling of constraint in the climate of opinion in those countries.

This fundamental differences of approach has implications for rural schools. They can more easily provide a basic general education over the whole compulsory age range when there is little specialist teaching and when the main criterion is whether the set curriculum is covered, instead of being concerned with high individual levels of attainment, and when education at school is regarded as only the beginning of a prolonged student phase of life.

3.7.6. The Influence of a Centrally-Determined Curriculum

The backward state of rural schools in Scandinavia during the first half of the present century has been mentioned. Since then the drive to raise their standards has made progress, especially during the last thirty years, and this can be largely attributed to the centrally-determined curriculum. Formerly the rural schools had a 'rural curriculum' which was regarded as inferior to the curriculum of the towns

and cities, a shorter period of compulsory schooling, and poorer teaching. It has been a 'curriculum-led development'. The curriculum has set norms, which serve as guide-lines for staffing, finance and teaching resources, and it provides a basis for consultation with parents and the public about what is regarded as a satisfactory education and the extent to which a particular school is up to standard. Teachers have the approved syllabus set out for them, on which the weaker ones can lean. It gives much support to unqualified teachers such as those still serving in some remote Norwegian schools. It prescribes a general education to be provided for all children by the state, and through its impetus this aim has been largely achieved.

Its particular significance for rural schools is that even in the most remote location the necessary teachers and finance must be provided to cover the curriculum. While the small number of children in a sparsely populated area has naturally to be taken into account, it does not by itself determine the number of teachers, for the requirements of the curriculum have to be met. Staffing problems are simplified because teachers are expected to be 'generalists', teaching all subjects, abilities and ages of children across the compulsory age-range from seven to fifteen. Much importance is attached to the curriculum in all three countries, but the degree of control it is designed to exercise is different in each of them.

In Denmark it provides a framework with guide-lines, and the essential features are set out in a booklet available to parents and children. It gives the compulsory and optional subjects, with upper and lower numbers of periods a week for each of them, and also a clear guide on the choices to be made by parents and children, on marking

and examinations, and on how parents can be represented on the school board, education committee and municipal council to participate in decision-making about the school. Teachers, as well as parents, have a considerable measure of freedom as to how the central curriculum should be implemented. The choice of text-books and other resources, within the agreed budget, lies with each teacher. As the teacher usually moves up with a class year by year there is no need to consult colleagues. Schools do not have a departmental organisation, and there is no loss of continuity. Few schools in Denmark are remote or have less than fifty pupils, and this may be one reason why the curriculum allows considerable flexibility according to local wishes.

In Sweden educational policy, and the central curriculum it prescribes, is the product of a combination of political pressure and a sustained programme of psychometric research. The aim has been to provide a good general education and to improve schools in remote rural areas. The reforms of the last twenty-five years, based on the development of nine-year comprehensive schools in all parts of the country, have enabled these aims to be largely achieved. There are difficulties in providing all the optional subjects and the specialist teaching that goes with them at the upper secondary level in small schools, although experiments are being tried with teaching two or more year-groups in a class. The indications are that it can be done sufficiently well in many cases to make it preferable to the alternatives of boarding orlong school journeys. The subjects, with syllabus and time allotted, are prescribed in the Laererplan, which was produced after widespread consultation and which sets out the programme of teaching to be followed in all schools. Text-books and teaching

aids have to be approved by the National Board of Education, which is the part of the Ministry of Education and cultural affairs responsible for schools. Although the guide-lines encourage experimentation by teachers and schools, lessons show little variation, since for most teachers the approach is dictated by the format of the text-books. There has been much discussion about decentralisation, and in particular about allowing sufficient local freedom to relate optional subjects in the last three years of schooling to employment available in the area in which each school is situated. This led to the promulgation of a new curriculum (Lgr. 80) in 1981, which allows pupils more choice between optional studies and more opportunities to participate in school activities as well as giving more freedom and responsibility to individual schools.

In Norway the Monsterplan prescribes the number of lessons and the syllabus in each subject, with detailed instructions on how each lesson is to be taught. The instructions are so precise as to obviate analysis or experimentation. Lessons are predictably similar in all parts of the country, and so are text-books, which are recommended by the Ministry. A successful teacher is one whose class settles down quietly to the lessons for the day, and although the curriculum is supposed to allow variation to meet local circumstances, deviation tends to be viewed with suspicion. In general, parents are not involved in discussions about the curriculum or school organisations, regarding teachers as professionals who should make the decisions. On the other hand, parents are well-informed about what the curriculum and school organisation should be, and about the rights of their children, and if these are not met to their satisfaction they do not hesitate to criticise inadequacies and press for improvement, even in some cases going on strike and refusing to allow their children to attend until the inadequacy

has been remedied.

The central curriculum in Norway, as in Sweden, provides a basis for calculating the number of teachers required, and thus of raising standards in rural areas. But it has allowed little variation to meet local conditions, and has led to growing pressure for more flexibility at a time when there has been a strong move for political and administrative decentralisation. Another consequence has been a uniform pattern of teaching, with little vitality. Teachers are willing to follow the detailed guide-lines because they know just what is expected of them, and new teachers find them helpful, while pupils and their parents know precisely what they should be studying. But critics are aware that schooling has tended to become a dull routine, and there is a feeling that more attention should be given to the quality of education now that provision has been so much improved, especially in terms of school buildings and staffing. This would involve, among other things, a fresh approach to the curriculum.

3.7.7. A Project with a Rural Curriculum - the Lofoten Islands Project

The wide-ranging discussions in Scandinavia about improving the curriculum have two recurring themes - how the curriculum should be adapted to a rural environment on the one hand, and on the other to living and employment in contemporary society. The idea of having a separate rural curriculum has been resisted, because it can be regarded as inferior to the urban curriculum, and because it is less suitable for continued education or good jobs. So discussion in this field is frequently confined to considering how the rural environment can be used to enrich a curriculum or to bring it closer to life for children in rural schools. To this extent there is a parallel with the curricula observed in Northumberland Village schools.

A project based on the Lofoten Islands is interesting in its efforts to adapt the curriculum to the environment, even though it has been concerned with children in their last two years at school, and not with children of primary age. Its origin can be traced back to the difficulties of remote schools in northern Norway. In some of these schools children attended only three days a week because of the long distances they had to travel, and it was difficult to attract qualified teachers. In consequence the curriculum had to be simplified, and in the process the academic subjects came to be regarded as essential, and the practical skills of fishing and farming were seen as merely optional. This led to the feeling that the national curriculum had a strong urban bias, in spite of the strong reaction against having a separate rural curriculum. This was the background against which the Lofoten project was initiated from Tromso University in 1973, at a time when the Monsterplan had been revised to make it more flexible, with the aim of showing how the local environment could be used in teaching.

The Lofoten Islands lie off the north-west coast of Norway. The population of all the islands is about 10,000 of whom 4,000 live in the capital. The project was started soon after the length of compulsory schooling had been extended from seven years to nine. It was directed to the upper secondary level, after the basic education had been completed, and when the pupils were already thinking about the problem of finding employment. The interest of teachers was enlisted to devise a suitable work programme within the framework of the Monsterplan, and this involved rearranging the school holidays and giving pupils work experience outside school for a considerable part of each week in their last two years. Teachers and local residents together produced a series of four text-books on the science, history, economy and

culture of the Lofoten Islands, together with manuals, slides and tapes for use with them.

The effect on the schools was disappointing. Teachers accustomed to following the precise instructions of the Monsterplan could not easily adopt the freer approach which was required by the local studies, and were unable to devise lessons based on the four books, while pupils found them unlike the school books to which they were accustomed, and had difficulties in learning from them. Also when new teachers took the place of some of those who had been enthusiastically involved in the early stages, the new methods lost their momentum.

However, the project had an unexpected and valuable side-effect in stimulating the interest of local communities, making them aware of the environment and generating much enthusiasm and local pride. They have published a Lofoten year book, which along with the text-books has sold well in the communities and to visitors. Although the project has failed to inject a new sense of vitality into the school curriculum to the extent that was hoped for, the valuable contribution it has made to the communities in the area has been worthwhile in other ways.[100]

3.7.8. The Pang Project with Mixed Age Groups in Small Schools

Another project of significance for rural schools in Britain is the PANG project which was started in a school at Hallen in Sweden in 1976, under the direction of Goteborg University. It was concerned with older children, and not with children of primary age, with whom fewer difficulties might be expected. The initials stand for Process Analysis of Non-Grading, and the project studied how pupils of upper secondary level (13 to 16 year old) could be taught in mixed age groups

[100] D'AETH. Ibid p. 36

in small schools at a time of falling rolls, in order to avoid their having to travel long distances to larger area schools. The term 'non-grading' implies having pupils with an age-spread of two years or more in a class. The task was to investigate how the syllabus requirements of the Laererplan could be met with these small groups of mixed ability and age. It was found possible to do this in all subjects except mathematics and languages, provided a full range of suitable teaching material was available. A number of problems were discerned, including the difficulties of pupils in learning to study independently, and of teachers in having to adjust to a more complex pattern of teaching. But the project also showed how much is possible in devising ways of teaching classes with children of mixed ages and abilities, and it indicated the potential advantages of a small school.

3.7.9. School and Community

A crucial feature of Scandinavian schools is the close relationship between the municipal councils responsible for the compulsory schools and the communities in which the schools are situated. The scale of administration is intimate. In rural areas a municipality may administer only a handful of schools, which enables finance to be discussed with each of them individually - for example Norway has 446 municipalities administering some 3,400 primary and lower secondary schools, an average of 7 or 8 schools to each council. In this situation the municipal councils have a strong sense of responsibility for their schools, and of being directly accountable to the local communities. Members of a council know each school, and many of the teachers in them.

The school has a dual relationship, with the local council for administration and finance, and with local families. In Scandinavia the sense of family is strong, especially in the dispersed rural areas of Norway and Sweden, where there is often little movement of people.

Administration by relatively small local councils is characteristic of each country, although there are variations between them. Sweden has 278 councils, of which a fifth have a population of less than 10,000, their boundaries often reflecting older settlement areas and local loyalties. The municipalities administer the compulsory schools through their elected council and education committee and teachers. Parents and older pupils are encouraged to participate actively. The financial arrangement differs markedly in one respect from Britain, in that central government pays all, or nearly all, of teachers' salaries. In addition it makes grants to the municipalities to supplement their income from local taxation, the grants being higher for poor municipalities and vice versa, and being negotiated annually by each municipality with the government.

In Denmark the Ministry's Laererplan allows considerable flexibility in arranging the teaching programme and time-table, and also in the provision of optional subjects and in the organisation of the school, and consequently the municipalities have important decisions to make. Each elected council has an education committee, on which parents are strongly represented, and there are also teachers' councils. The guidelines of the Ministry encourage local participation, and they are set out in a form which can be understood readily by pupils as well as parents and others. Finance is provided by local taxes supplemented by government grants, with teacher's salaries being negotiated locally, and there is some co-ordination of the municipalities at country level to maintain reasonable uniformity.

In Norway there has been a strong movement for decentralisation in government, and yet the municipalities have little freedom in administering the compulsory schools, because the directives of the central

Monsterplan issued by the Ministry of Church and Education are detailed, and there is little opportunity or inclination to diverge from them. Parents do not take an active part as in Denmark. The administration of the compulsory schools by the municipalities is co-ordinated by the counties, which represent the Ministry regionally. Financial support from central government is negotiated annually, is more generous for poor municipalities, and details are published and circulated to all schools in readily comprehensible form.

Just as municipalities feel their responsibility for administering the schools closely with the communities, so the view is held that there should be the greatest possible local control of finance. Members of the community can assess the needs at first-hand and, if they are well-informed of the implications, can make responsible decisions about local taxes and negotiations with central government over grants. One aspect stands out clearly. It is that the local communities expect to be fully informed and consulted about finance for their compulsory schools. Moreover, the local councils are responsible not only for their schools, but also for services coming under other ministries, and they can co-ordinate them effectively within their overall budgets, the clear guidelines set by the central government ensuring that good standards are maintained.

3.7.10. The Local Co-ordination of Schools and Other Facilities

The municipal council is generally responsible for meeting expenditure on compulsory schooling, the largest item in its budget for both capital and recurrent costs, and also on social services, community development, etc. The school building is the obvious centre for other facilities, and the pre-school class, library, sports grounds and recreational facilities are often planned in conjunction with it.

Sometimes there is in addition, a shopping centre or old people's home. The school dining room can serve also as a restaurant while the library can be used by pupils. These are natural ways of taking advantage of the local council's investment (with grant from the central government) in the school building, and pooling some of the operating costs. There is no problem in co-ordinating separate budgets as all the finance comes, albeit under various headings, through the municipal council because of the relatively small scale of the operation. Education is in any case seen as a constituent part of a range of services for children, youth and adults, not as an independent system of schooling, and the municipality has a strong sense of overall responsibility for looking after all the people in its area. For the school to play a central part in the provision of communal facilities is a natural consequence of the high priority accorded to education by all political parties as a means of promoting good living standards and developing modern democracy.

3.8. Conclusions

(1) It is difficult to define a Scandinavian view about the minimum size of a rural school. The struggle to improve rural education means that no change would be considered that was not in the direction of giving the children more equal opportunity, and the closure of a small school would not as a rule be contemplated unless the parents gave their agreement to the alternative. Their view is coloured by the climate of opinion, and this has changed from being in favour of reorganisation, which involved closing many small schools and transporting children into large schools serving a wider area, towards a policy of retaining small rural schools whenever this could be done satisfactorily by giving the necessary additional support. In consequence attention

has been directed to the criteria that denote satisfactory provision for the children to have equality of opportunity, and these have been defined in terms of curriculum and the staffing which is required, rather than on pupil-teacher ratios or how small a school can be viable.

(2) The approach to the second key issue - how can a small school provide good all-round teaching, and what are its special needs? - is different in Scandinavia. The notion of good teaching is closely related to covering the prescribed curriculum satisfactorily, and staffing and resources have to be provided to ensure that this is done. This commonly applies not only to younger children, but also for the full compulsory age-range, usually up to the age of fifteen.

(3) Rural schools are administered by local councils, each of which is often responsible for only a handful of schools, and this ensures that there is a sense of local responsibility for the schools, with members of the committees making decisions about the schools knowing many of the teachers in them. The small municipal councils in Scandinavia are in striking contrast to our large LEA's, whose size was increased in the reorganisation of local government in 1974.

(4) The local co-ordination of schooling with housing, employment, transport, health and other services is achieved much more readily in Scandinavia because the municipal councils have overall responsibilities and know the local situation intimately.

(5) The Scandinavian view-point on criteria in assessing the economic costs of rural schools is radically different. The starting point is that children in rural areas should not have an inferior education to urban children, and they should not have to travel long distances, if satisfactory schooling can be provided near their homes. This principle is regarded as more important than a rough comparison between the unit

costs or pupil-teacher ratios of large urban and small rural schools. These points will be considered later in relation to recommendations stemming from this investigation.

CHAPTER 4

THE INVESTIGATION

4.1 Introduction

It became clear at an early stage that this was to be an empirical study. Research and documentation in the enquiry area has been limited.

1. An OECD working party on sparsely populated areas reported in 1979.[101] Sponsored jointly by the Department of Education and Science, the Welsh Office Education Department and Cumbria Local Education Authority, this working party had for three years concerned itself with investigating basic education and teacher support in rural areas of England and Wales.

   Research was concentrated on five main topics:

   a. The range and quality of educational opportunity in rural schools.

   b. The continued maintenance of small schools as a policy.

   c. Special education and boarding in rural areas.

   d. A curriculum model for rural secondary schools.

   e. Alternatives to closure.

   The conclusion was that the problems of education in sparsely populated areas are part of a wider, more general concern for rurality as a whole. It is not a static, but an ongoing, fluid problem. This accords with the tentative conclusions drawn at the end of Chapter 2 of this study.

2. Also in 1979, and concurrently with the commencement of this study, an enquiry into the social effects of rural primary school reorganisation in England and Wales was started at the University of Aston in Birmingham. The enquiry was undertaken on behalf of the Department of the Environment and the Department of Education and Science. The research team consisted of seven members from the

[101] ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT. Project on Sparsely Populated Areas. London 1978

University's Joint Unit for Research on the Urban Environment and the Department of Educational Enquiry.

The general aims of the project were to examine the social role which rural primary schools play in local communities and to assess the implications of primary school reorganisation, including closures.

There was little evidence stemming from the report of this research published in 1981 [102], to suggest that rural school closures to date have triggered rural decline, and while rural schools can act as a focus for community development, alternative facilities seemed able to fulfil parallel social roles.

It was, however, not so much in either the remit or the conclusions of these two investigations, but rather in their methodology that the implications for this study were seen to lie.

It was recognised that in the absence of a coherent body of developed theory and suitable secondary data sources, the study would probably be focused on the analysis of a series of case studies centred on Northumbrian villages and concerned with the perceived role of existing and former schools, along with an examination of the social effects of their closure on communities.

Whereas information for the OECD project had been obtained by the use of postal questionnaires, the Aston investigation was to be based predominantly on personal interviews conducted in villages. It was towards an evaluation of the appropriateness of these two approaches in a Northumbrian context that early attention was directed. Scott[103] and Hockstim[104] have written on the possibility of inadequate response

[102] UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM. The Social Effects of Rural Primary School Reorganisation. Birmingham 1981

[103] SCOTT, C. Research on Mail Surveys. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society 124. London 1961

[104] HOCHSTIM, J.R. A Critical Comparison of Three Strategies of Collecting Data from Households. Journal of the American Statistical Association 62. Washington 1967

to mailed questionnaires, and their shortcomings of feedback when answers involving judgment are required.

On the other hand Selltiz [105] has laid stress on their economy in time and expense, and on the wide coverage which they can provide, while Cooper and Brown [106] have demonstrated that non-contacts are fewer than in interview situations.

These arguments in favour of the use of the mailed questionnaire in this study were appealing. Northumberland's four rural district council areas on which it was proposed to base this investigation had, at the 1981 census, an average population of only .40 persons per hectare In terms of Cloke's Index of Rurality [107], most of the area is designated as 'extreme rural'. The inconvenience of considerable travel and frustrated interviews could be avoided if a mailed questionnaire proved effective.

It was for this reason that a pilot survey was decided on, to provide guidelines for the investigation proper. Cumbria was selected as a neighbouring local education authority with a preponderance of small schools and a Cloke's designation as 'extreme rural'[108]. The pilot survey is outlined in the following Case Study.

105 SELLTIZ, C., JAHODA, M., DEUTSCH, M., and COOK, S.W. Research Methods in Social Relations. New York 1959

106 COOPER, B. and BROWN, A.C. Psychiatric Practice in Great Britain and America: a comparative study British Journal of Psychiatry 113. London 1967

107 CLOKE, P.J. An Index of Rurality. Regional Studies. Vol. 11 Oxford 1977.

108 CLOKE. Op Cit. p. 37

4.2

Case Study

Village School Closures in Cumbria Since 1970

A survey of 28 villages in Cumbria whose schools have closed since 1970 was undertaken.

The survey was designed to produce:

(a) A general statement on the reasons for closing village schools in Cumbria.

(b) More detailed views on the social consequences of village school closures.

(c) The opinions of those living in the rural communities affected.

The following questions were asked:

1. On what grounds do you consider your school was closed?
2. To what extent were public, parents and parish-council consulted?
3. How have people's attitudes changed since they first heard of the closure?
4. Are bussing arrangements satisfactory to parents?
5. Has the closure of the school affected social life in the village?
6. Has the closure of the school affected other services and facilities in the village?
7. Has the closure of the school affected adult or child population?
8. Has social and community life been affected by the closure of your school?
9. Do you feel able to comment on the effect of the school's closure educationally and in other ways, on the children?
10. How would you compare the former school and the 'host' school in terms of equipment and general social contact?

A modified form of quota sampling was employed.

The questionnaire was sent to parish councils, women's institutes, clergy, and village hall committees in parishes where schools had been closed. Additional questionnaires were sent on request to individual parents and other interested people. Replies were forthcoming from 25 parishes. A summary of the answers and comments follows:

1. Local views on why schools were closed

The survey confirmed that the major reason for closure of their primary school as understood by the respondents, was lack of numbers caused in the main by a declining child population. Inadequate facilities and assumed educational disadvantage were also reasons given for closure. However in several cases there was apparent confusion as to the precise reason for closure, and reasons offered for closure by the education authority were felt to have changed as protests were made. In fact, primary school rolls in the county are expected to decline from 50,750 (1978) to 37,000 (1985).

2. Local attitudes to village school closure

With four exceptions all villages opposed the closure of their schools. The exceptions were where -

(a) people felt they were being presented with a fait accompli

(b) the children were being moved to a school in the same parish

(c) the school closed was not in a village.

Of those who originally opposed closure, some are now resigned and have accepted the fact. However almost one third of the respondents still regret the loss of the school. The main reason for the continuing regret seems to be caused by the loss to the community, and not because of the effects of the change on the children. This is reflected throughout the returned questionnaires and specifically in replies like:

'The children were transferred to ..... school and have settled

there satisfactorily. The attitude of the people that the closure of the school was a loss to the village has not changed'.

From this and other evidence there would seem to be initially two distinct reasons for opposing the closure of a village school:

(i) Concern for the children's education, upbringing and safety.

This applies especially to the younger children, the 4 - 8 year olds. Parents often feel their children are receiving as good an education and are as close to home as they possibly can be, and any alternative would be second best.

They are also very concerned that extra travelling time to and from school would not be in the best interests of the children, especially when they are unsupervised. In making out cases to maintain their village primary schools, villagers have found almost as much evidence in support of small village schools on educational grounds e.g. working in "family" groups, individual attention etc., as there is against them. They have found in many cases that ex-pupils of village schools have relatively high attainment levels.

(a) However, replies to the questionnaire indicated that the change to another larger but still rural school has not adversely affected the children educationally. In general people felt it was too early to comment on the educational pros and cons, but when asked to compare the old school and the new school with regard to equipment, child welfare, play and contact with others of a similar age group, most respondents were of the opinion that the move had been beneficial to the children. The only regret was that individual attention was not perhaps as great in some instances as it had been in the former schools.

(b) Parents and children were satisfied with transport arrangements to the new host schools. In almost all cases free transport is provided at the Local Education Authority's expense, and in only two instances was a specific concern expressed about lack of supervision on buses. Although in almost all cases children had to travel further to school (on average 4 - 6 miles return trip) and spent half an hour to an hour longer away from home, there were no complaints registered.

If opinion expressed by the replies can be said to be representative, it goes some way to allaying fears that the closure of village schools adversely affects the children. Obviously this conclusion has been helped by the fact that children are not travelling great distances, and the schools they have moved to are not exceedingly large and are often in neighbouring villages. So although it is almost certainly too early to present a conclusive picture, there appears in the cases looked at, no loss educationally, and no problem with transport.

(ii) Concern for the Community

(a) When asked how closure had affected social and community life, replies were equally divided as to whether there had been a negative effect, no effect at all, or even a positive effect. However on examination, the replies that indicated an increase in social and community life mainly referred to use of the village hall, or to the fact that the school had been turned into a community centre for the use of the villagers e.g. "Social and community life increased by the availability of the centre".

Replies suggesting there had been a negative effect seemed to consider a wider although perhaps not as tangible aspect of community life e.g. "Definitely a loss of identity as a village community".

(b) The use of the village school building after the school was closed varied from village to village, but it seemed either to be sold for conversion to a private dwelling or used as a village hall or community centre. In the latter case no loss of social activity had occurred; however where the school had gone to a private owner activities that had previously taken place in the school had been switched to the village hall where possible, but in some instances there had been a decline in social activities. In five cases the old school building was still empty with one reply in particular: "It has been left to go to ruin. Windows and floors are damaged. Doors also, so that there is access to the interior".

(c) Population and services

The majority of respondents stated that their village population had increased or remained static within the last twenty years and felt that the closure of the school had not contributed to a change in population, although it is probably too soon to say. Interestingly many replied that the number of children in their village had increased.

With regard to the provision of services other than the school, people cited transport as being the major loss to the village. They did not on the whole think that closure of the school had contributed to further loss of other services and facilities but again several mentioned the loss of community spirit and identity.

"Facilities and services may not have declined much but the closure has scattered the people".

It must be emphasised that this survey only examined the short-term effects of school closure on villages, and changes in population and services may occur over a longer period.

3. Summary of Responses

From the evidence of the replies to the questionnaire, it would seem that:

(1) In the majority of cases children have not been adversely affected by a change of school, and have settled satisfactorily, enjoying the benefits of better facilities and more companions of a similar age.

(2) Travel arrangements to the new schools have been accepted by almost all.

(3) Although there has not as yet in most cases been an accompanying decrease in facilities or village population, there has often been a loss in community cohesion and identity, after the village school has been lost to the village.

Because the responses to question 8 on social and community life are pertinent to the Northumbria enquiry, they are listed below:

Question 8: Has social and community life been affected by the closure of your school?

Parish	Response
Cartmell Fell	No
Whicham	This coincided roughly with the union of four parishes and the sacrifice of an independent rector. Result has been a catastropic loss of identity and community integration. Growth of second homes will undoubtedly ultimately ruin a strong sense of community.

Parish	Response
Walton	No
"	"Dead during day" is main comment, especially by older people.
Greysouthen	No.
"	Parents have to travel by car to attend school functions as there are no buses to the village of Englesfield. Older residents and those without cars are cut off from school activities.
Dalston	No.
Cumdivock	No.
Gamblesby	Social and community life has increased by availability of a community centre.
"	Probably not
"	No.
Little Strickland	Not immediately noticeable - but we think there will be a long term effect - from taking children out of their environment to teach them.
Maughanby	No.
Nether Denton	Yes.
"	Yes.
Wetheral	It is difficult for new people, mothers especially, when there is no school to serve as a meeting place.
"	Too early to say.
"	Mothers miss contact with teachers and other parents. Elderly people say they miss the mothers and children passing on their way to and from school.
"	Not noticeable
"	Yes, parents miss the school as a daily social meeting place.
"	Parents seldom meet, and children are not able to enjoy social activities after school.
"	No.
Troutbeck	There is definitely a loss of identity as a village community.
Talkin	No.

Parish	Response
Irton	Yes. School functions brought parents and other villagers together. Though the school at Eskdale has functions, it is only the parents who go, not the Irton villagers.
Skirwith	Since the school closed in 1973 the social life in the village has increased slightly.
Hunsonby	No, since activities still continue in the same building.
Gilcrux	I do not think it has had a noticeably deleterious effect; if anything there has been an improvement.
Newbiggin-on-Lune	No, as Ravenstonedale and Newbiggin have always been joined socially and are controlled by the same parish council.
Laversdale	No, the village appears to be more united and more active in community life.
Ings	There is now just one church service per week.
Soulby	Yes, there is now more social and community life - that is since the school was changed to a village hall.
"	The opening of the village hall has increased social and community life.
Stainmore	Yes
Drumburgh	Yes
Dufton	No
Ainstable	Without doubt. Also noticeable in churches, both C. of E. and Methodist.

4.3 Design of the Investigation

4.3.1. Introduction

In terms of facts obtained, and indeed of general viewpoints expressed, the pilot survey carried out in Cumbria was valuable. Nevertheless it had distinct limitations.

These can be summarised as following:

1. Spontaneity of response was lacking. The closure of a village school has already been seen to be an emotive issue involving a psychological construct.

   Evidence of this did not come through on paper.

2. The responses given had to be accepted as final.

   There was no scope for supplementary questions.

3. There was evidence that some respondents, having scanned all the questions, engineered their comments accordingly to produce a logical sequence. Independent, albeit inconsistent responses, would have been preferred.

4. There was no opportunity to supplement answers by observable data. Webb's 'unobtrusive measures' [109] were inapplicable.

5. The sampling technique used was open to considerable criticism because of its emphasis on 'establishment' figures.

4.3.2. Strategy of Investigation

In the light of the shortcomings of the pilot survey, it was decided to employ a two-fold thrust:

(1) The collection of data and information at county and village level in Northumberland. This being factual and objective was seen as being amenable to postal questionnaires.

(2) Personal interviews with residents of Northumbrian villages.

[109] WEBB, E.J., CAMPBELL, D.T., SCHWARTZ, R.D., and SECHREST, L. Unobtrusive Measures: Non Reactive Research in the Social Sciences. Chicago 1973.

4.3.3. Collection of Data and Information

The Education and Planning Departments of Northumberland County Council co-operated in supplying data. So did the four District Councils concerned. The Area Health Authority and other regional authorities were equally helpful.

At village level, clerks of Parish Councils and other key personnel offered information on services and facilities. They also reported retrospectively on former aspects of life in their communities. The aim was to draw up a comprehensive factual profile of each village under consideration. Against these profiles was to be set a series of interviews with villagers. An example of the questionnaire completed by key personnel is included as Appendix 1.

4.3.4. Aims of Interviews

Given the overall purpose of the investigation, interviews were designed to get answers to the following questions:

(1) Do people like living in their villages? Or do they not?

(2) To what extent could their reaction be allied to the quality of the social fabric of the village?

(3) Amongst the constituents of this social fabric, could the presence or absence of a school be identified as a factor of significance?

4.3.5. Definition of Social Fabric

By social fabric is meant that web of companionship and interrelatedness which binds people together and causes them to feel that they belong to a place. It can manifest itself in a variety of ways: friendly get-togethers, clubs, spare-time pursuits, village shows, sports events, meals-on-wheels and children's playgroups. It can be influenced by the presence or absence of amenities such as transport, welfare services, work patterns, housing and community centres. In

the context of this study it is 'what makes a village tick'.

4.3.6. Target Population

The intention was to interview, on average, six people in each of 20 villages in Northumberland.

The criteria used for selecting these villages were as follows:

a. They were to have a population of less than a thousand.

b. They were to be spread over the rural District Council areas in the County.

c. They were to be made up of ten pairs of villages, these pairs to be geographically and socio-economically consistent, with one village possessing a first school, and the other having lost it.

The selection of respondents was to be by a quasi-random sample of parish electoral registers, using random numbers based on the tables of Kendall and Smith [111]. It was appreciated that this source was subject to deficiencies, including:

1. 4% of eligible people who do not register. This could be 6% of the under 30's and more mobile groups.

2. 8% who move within twelve months of registration

4.3.7. Interviewing Technique

Experience gained in the Cumbrian Case Study indicated that postal questionnaires constrain respondents. Face-to-face interviews conducted in people's own homes was seen as a more natural, confidence-engendering situation for the purposes of this investigation.

It was decided to use the focused interview which relies heavily

[111] KENDALL, M.G. and SMITH, B. Tables of Random Sampling Numbers Cambridge 19

on subjective experiences, attitudes and emotional responses to particular concrete situations.

Although the interview is carefully structured and the major areas of enquiry are mapped-out, the interviewee is given considerable freedom to express his definition of a situation. Therefore the focused interview is regarded as semi-standardised. It is based on the assumption that through it, it is possible to secure precise detail of personal reactions, specific emotions called into play, and definite mental associations provoked by a certain stimulus.

In the closed village environment it was considered that there was less likely to be distortion or concealment of actual experiences by using the focused rather than the more generalised unfocused interview.

Questions used in the interviews are to be found on pages 152 and 153.

4.3.8. Attitudes of Respondents

In seeking respondents' views, attention was paid to the theoretical developments of increasing elegance concerned with the psychological organisation underlying 'attitudes'. The term 'attitude' is seen as the disposition of individuals to view things in certain ways and to act accordingly. Attitudes are complexes of ideas and sentiments.

Definitions of attitude have certain essential features in common. Almost invariably, one of these is that they are acquired or learned. Another is that attitudes are inferred from modes of behaviour by the same individual over a time span, that are characteristic, consistent and selective. Thomas and Znaniecki [112], Murphy and Newcomb [113],

[112] THOMAS, W.I. and ZNANIECKI, F. The Polish Peasant in Europe and America. U.S.A. 1920

[113] MURPHY, G and NEWCOMB, T.M. 'Experimental Social Psychology' London 1937

Allport [114] and Smith, Bruner and White [115] have enlarged on these qualities.

In particular, it seemed appropriate in this investigation to take note of consistency or balance theories, which since the mid-1950's have been the focal point of the study of attitude change. Heider's theory of balance [116] Newcomb's theory of interpersonal relations and Rosenberg and Abelson's theory of cognitive dissonance theory was related to discrepant verbal behaviour which was noted amongst respondents.[117]

It is not suggested that a searching psychological grid was applied to each interview. Rather that a degree of awareness was exercised.

4.3.9. Analysis and Comparison of Results

From an analysis and comparison of statistical profiles and interviews it was considered that it would be possible to determine the following:

(1) The extent to which the presence or absence of a village school can be seen as influencing population trends and community amenities.

(2) The extent to which the presence or absence of a village school generates an emotional response.

(3) The rank of the village school and its teachers in a hierarchy of locally-determined social priorities.

(4) The extent to which the presence or absence of a village school can be seen to influence social life.

[114] ALLPORT, A.W. 'Attitudes' in C. Murchison (Ed) 'A Handbook of Social Psychology'. U.S.A. 1935.

[115] SMITH, M.B. BRUNER, J.S. & WHITE, R.W. 'Opinions and Reasonability' U.S.A. 1956

[116] HEIDER, F. 'The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations'. U.S.A. 1958

[117] FESTINGER, L. 'A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance' U.S.A. 1957

4.4 The Investigation - County Level

4.4.1. Population Trends

So far, this report has been looking over its shoulder at what has happened in the past to our Northumbrian villages and their schools. From now on the emphasis will be on current policy and future prospects.

The 1981 census figures show an increase in population in rural District Council areas of the County, as compared with 1971:

Table 4

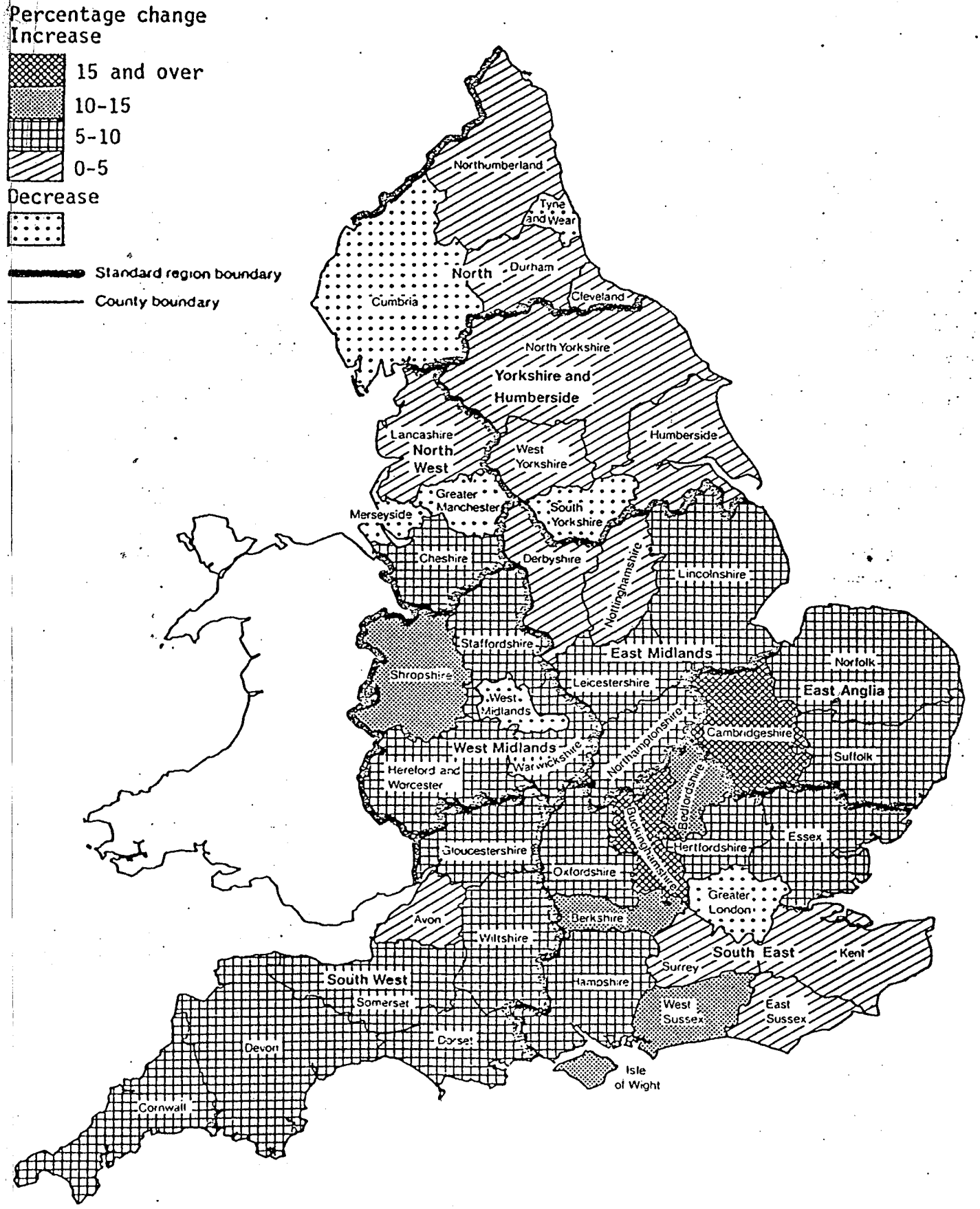
Districts	Hectares	Persons per hectare 1981	Population 1961	1971	1981
Alnwick	108,028	0.3	30,035	27,936	28,734
Berwick upon Tweed	97,453	0.3	28,080	25,783	26,230
Castle Morpeth	61,912	0.8	42,596	47,505	50,570
Tynedale	222,096	0.2	52,286	53,149	55,087

This increase is reflected in analyses of national figures which indicate that a category of 78 local authority districts in England and Wales, which can be classified as remoter, was the only settlement category whose rate of population growth was maintained between 1961-1971 and 1971-1981; it rose from 9.7 to 10.3% Not only was this positive shift contrary to the national trend towards slower growth; the national mean fell from 5.7 to 0.5% between the two intercensal periods, but it made this category nearly the fastest-growing type in the country.

A tendency towards stronger rural growth has been noted in a number of other countries, most notably in North America and Europe. Berry has related it to the more general phenomenon of 'counterurbanisation'

Projected change in population, 1979-91, England

MAP 1



121

Source: Population Trends in Rural Britain. HMSO. 1981.

in the U.S.A.[118] while Morrison and Wheeler have examined the question of whether a 'rural renaissance' is taking place there [119]. An important finding of these studies is that the apparent turnaround is not limited to rural areas close to major urban areas; some of the most spectacular changes have occurred in rural areas which are relatively remote from traditional metropolitan influences. 'Population Trends' [120] forecasts a 5% increase in population in Northumberland between 1979 and 1991: (see Map 1)

These figures cannot, of course, be seen as leading to a completely different distribution of the population. It seems likely also that some of the migration to the countryside is by elderly people without school-age children. Nevertheless there are indications that rural Northumberland is attracting a greater population, and that school rolls may benefit in the future.

Currently, however, the County has a large number of small village schools. In January 1982 there were 51 such schools with less than 60 pupils on roll. They are listed overleaf. (Table 5.)

[118] BERRY, B.J.L. (Ed.) Urbanisation and Counterurbanisation Urban Affairs Annual Review. New York 1976.

[119] MORRISON, P.A. and WHEELER, J.P. Rural Renaissance in America? Population Bulletin. Washington. 1976

[120] CHAMPION, A.G. Population Trends in Rural Britain. H.M.S.O. 1981

Table 5 Schools with Less Than 60 Pupils on Roll. Jan. 1982

First Schools	No. on roll
Henshaw	59
Belsay	52
Broomhaugh, Stamfordham; Warkworth	49
Cambois	45
Acomb; Amble R.C.	44
Acklington; Longhorsley	41
Lowick; Slaley	40
Humshaugh; Milfield; Whittingham	39
Chollerton; Whittonstall	38
Cornhill	37
Scremerston	36
Newbrough	32
Horncliffe, Lowgate, Norham	31
Tritlington	29
Herdley Bank; Linton	28
Beaufront; Kielder; Thropton	27
Embleton; West Woodburn	26
Greenhead	25
Ellingham	23
Cambo; Eglingham	22
Whitley Chapel	21
Chatton; Netherton Northside; Whalton	20
Greenhaugh	18
Branton; Ford	17
Whitfield	16

Holy Island	15
Beadnell; Craster; Harbottle; Kirknewton	14
Byrness	12
Bamburgh*	9
Rennington*	6

* To close Summer 1982

The size ranges of these schools are summarised in Table 6:

Table 6

Numerical Range	No. of Schools	Comments
60 - 50	2	
49 - 40	10	
39 - 30	11	
29 - 20	16	
19 - 10	10	
Less than 10	2	Nil by Autumn '82

4.4.2. LEA Policy

In the light of the number of small schools, it is important to examine the policy, and the record of the Northumberland Local Education Authority in relation to closures.

The following details have been obtained from the Aston University Survey of Rural Primary School Reorganisation [122]. Figures have been updated to Spring 1982 and have been supplemented by LEA officers:

[122] ASTON Op. Cit. pp. 13-30

a. The LEA's forecasts of the future first school populations are made as follows:

'Present school age groups, pre-school age groups and estimates of births from planning department are aged by the appropriate number of years and adjustments made for migration into the county (average of +25 children per age group per annum up to 1981, thereafter +15 children per age group per annum). This gives the total primary school population for Northumberland'.

b. County planning policies are taken account of:

'Migration assumptions fit with those in the N.C.C. Structure Plan. To apportion primary school population to different District Councils the same % of the total is used as for the population forecasts (total) given in the Structure Plan'.

c. Communication between departments of the Northumberland County Council takes place:

'A Population Working Group meets regularly to discuss population forecasts for the Capital Action Plan. Forecasts of the school age population are included'.

d. The actual/projected primary school population to 1990 is as follows:

Table 7

Area	Jan. '75		Jan. '78		Jan. '82		Jan. '86		Jan. '90	
	8	11 yrs.	8	11 yrs.	8	11 yrs.	8	11yrs.	8	11
Alnwick	1494	1244	1427	1131	1348	1211	1336	984	1516	1006
Berwick upon Tweed	1337	1066	1379	1003	1206	1083	1191	878	1347	894
Blyth Valley	4692	3271	4953	3565	3690	3313	3827	2819	4547	3017
Castle Morpeth	2663	2036	2593	1903	2412	2166	2454	1809	2863	1900
Tynedale	2751	2287	2719	2137	2696	2422	2744	2021	3199	2123
Wansbeck	3760	3220	3554	3018	2839	2549	2888	2128	3368	2235
County Total	16697	13174	16625	12762	14191	12744	14440	10639	16840	11175

e. Closure of village schools since 1955 have been as follows:

Table 8

District Council Area	Number of rural or village-based primary schools closed		
	Since April 1974	April 1967-March 1974	April 1955 March 1967
Alnwick	2	4	6
Berwick upon Tweed	3	2	18
Blyth Valley	0	3	0
Castle Morpeth	0	5	4
Tynedale	2	11	16
Wansbeck	2	1	2
County Total	9	26	46

f. The size of schools at the time of closure in terms of pupils, have been as follows:

Table 9

Number of pupils recorded January prior to closure	Rural or village-based primary schools closed		
	Since April 1974	April 1967-March 1974	April 1955-March 1967
Less than 10.0	1	9	14
10.0 - 20.0	3	9	22
20.5 - 30.0	4	3	6
30.5 - 40.0	1	2	2
40.5 - 50.0	-	-	1
50.5 - 60.0	-	-	-
60.5	-	3	1

g. In terms of teaching staff:

Table 10

Number of qualified teachers recorded January prior to closure	Rural or village-based schools closed		
	Since April 1974	April 1967-March 1974	April 1955-March 1967
1.0	3	18	32
1.1 - 2.0	6	5	13
2.1 - 3.0	-	2	-
3.1 - 4.0	-	-	1
4.1 - 5.0	-	-	-
5.1+	-	1	-

h. The status of schools at the time of closure was as follows:

Table 11

Type of Management/ control	Rural or village-based primary schools closed		
	Since April 1974	April 1967-March 1974	April 1955-March 1967
County primary schools	7	18	26
Voluntary aided	2	4	9
Voluntary controlled	0	4	11

i. The subsequent use of school premises has been as follows:

Table 12

Subsequent use of former school premises	Rural or village-based primary schools closed		
	Since April 1974	April 1967-March 1974	April 1955-March 1967
Transferred to other educational use	4	6	7
"Mothballed"	-	-	-
Reverted to trustees	-	3	6
Transferred to community use	2	6	8
Transferred to private use	3	10	25
Awaiting disposal	-	1	-

j. Northumberland LEA does not 'play the numbers game' when considering the viability of a school:

'The Authority has no set policy with regard to what is considered to be a viable or desirable size for a first school. Each school is considered on its merits, taking into account such factors as distance and route from the children's homes to alternative schools, condition of the buildings and the facilities available. As far as staffing is concerned, the Authority's aim is that first schools should have at least two teachers, but some small schools with less than 20 pupils have one full-time teacher and one part-timer. It is accepted that the opportunities available to the pupils could be limited, but intensive in-service training for the rural teachers and help from the advisory service are available to compensate'.

k. The current primary school staffing ratio in the County is as follows:

Table 13

Number of pupils	Full-time qualified teachers (including Head)	Part-time qualified teachers (FTE)	Total qualified teachers (FTE including Head)
0-20	1.5		1.5
21-50	2		2
51-90	3		3
91-124	4		4
125-140	5		5
141 upwards	Head + 1 per 34 pupils or part of 34		Head + 1 per 34 pupils or part of 34

l. The maximum travelling time and distance between home and school considered reasonable is:

Table 14

Primary school age group	Maximum time for one-way trip (minutes)	Maximum distance for one-way trip (miles)
Under 8 yrs.	30 mins	2 miles
8 - 9 years	30 mins	2 miles
9 - 11 years	45 mins	3 miles

m. The number of pupils of primary age travelling more than the above distances between home and school at the time of the survey were:

Table 15

Primary school age group	Number of pupils travelling more than 2 miles	Number of pupils travelling more than 3 miles
Under 8 yrs.	6000	
8 - 11 yrs.		6000

n. The amount of expenditure incurred by the LEA in bussing pupils shows the following picture:

Table 16

Years	Current/recurrent expenditure
1974-75	168,000
1975-76	180,000
1976-77	204,000
1977-78	252,000
1978-79	309,000
1979-80	370,000
1980-81	296,370
1981-82	362,680

4.4.3. Case Studies - School Closures

In an attempt to assess the operation of the LEA's policy in practice, the closure procedures of two village schools were monitored. The schools were at Blanchland and Falstone, and in both cases closure took place in August 1981. Blanchland then had 9 pupils and Falstone 11. Subsequently the results of closure were observed up to the Spring of 1982.

The LEA consulted parents, councillors and teachers. The closure of Blanchland was accepted reluctantly by parents who had particular misgivings about the moorland bus journey faced by their children to the new host school of Slaley. There was sustained resistance to the closure of Falstone on the basis of transport problems in the North Tyne in Winter, and because the child population was expected to rise in the late 80's.

In both cases the host schools integrated their new pupils satis-

factorily. The bad winter of 1981-82 caused some bussing difficulties. Blanchland seems to have accepted the loss of its school equably. There is a residue of resentment in Falstone.

4.4.4. Conclusions

Northumberland LEA shows a caring, methodical and educationally-orientated approach towards the closure of schools. It is conscious of the effects on the life of villages and exercises a reasonable consultative procedure.

However, parents are still suspicious of the motives of the LEA. This may be because they are not professionals. They are encouraged to ask questions, but often do not know what questions to ask. They find difficulty in countering educational arguments favouring closure. They become baffled by statistics.

This situation reflects in microcosm the democratic dilemma faced by the man-in-the street who wants to make a case, but is prey to the professionals whose stock-in-trade it is to deal in figures and philosophies.

4.5 The Investigation - Village level

4.5.1. Village Profiles

The location of villages used as case studies in this investigation is shown by parishes on Map 2.

Population statistics for the 19 villages, again by parishes appear in Table 17.

MAP 2

Location of Villages used for Case Studies

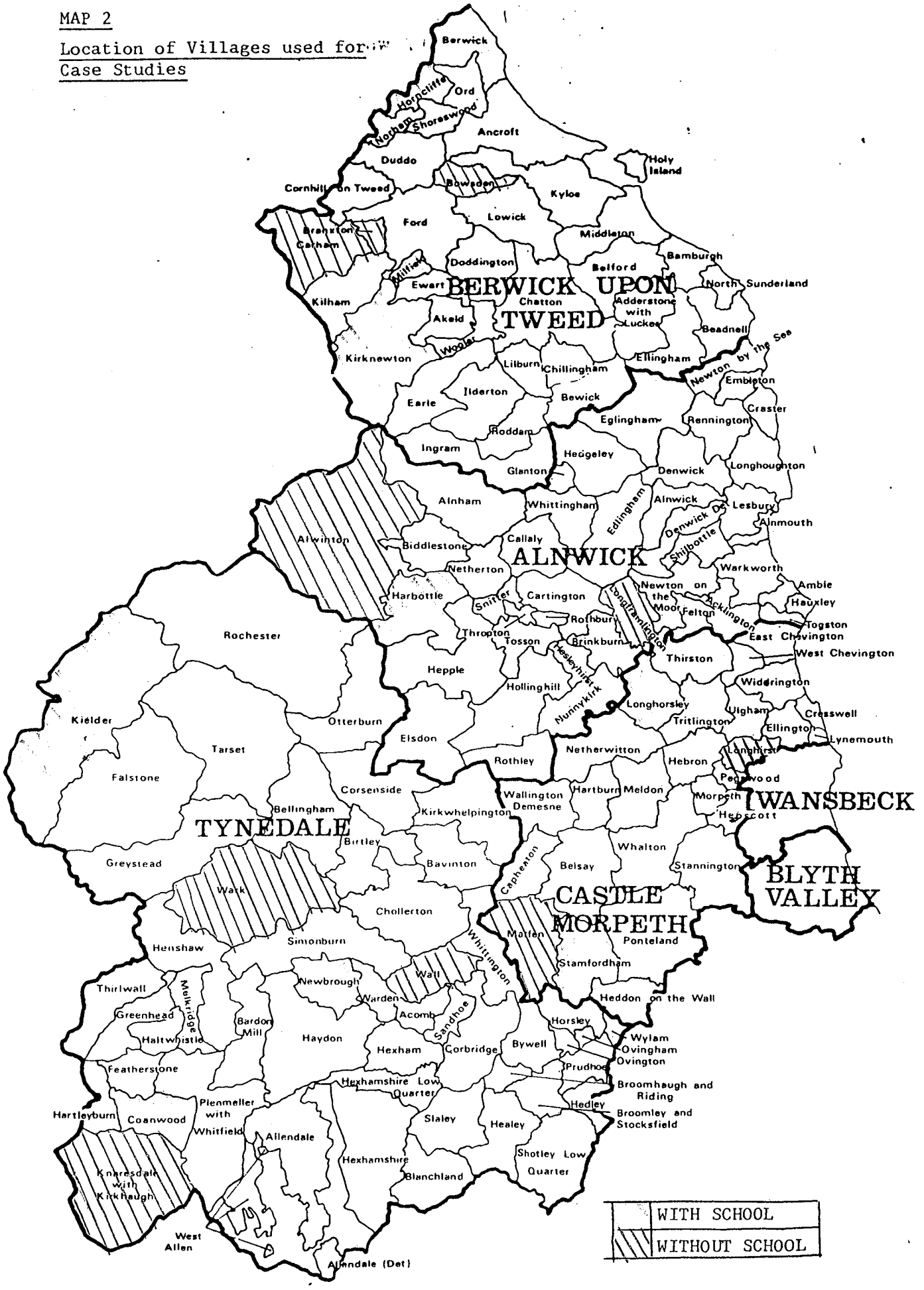


Table 17 POPULATION STATISTICS FOR CASE STUDY VILLAGES

Parish	1951	1961	1971	Population change 1951-61 No.	%	1961-71 No.	%
Alwinton	155	154	159	-1	-0.65	-35	-22.73
Harbottle	224	200	183	-24	-10.71	-17	-8.5
Longframlington	514	575	547	+61	+11.87	-28	-4.87
Bowsden	152	153	117	+1	+ 0.65	-36	-23.52
Branxton	196	162	138	-34	-17.35	-24	-14.81
Carham (Wark)	638	560	414	-78	-12.23	-146	-26.07
Kirknewton	213	208	165	-5	-2.35	-43	-20.67
Milfield	181	268	268	+87	+48.07	0	0
Horncliffe	415	508	359	+93	+22.41	-149	-29.33
Longhirst	475	521	359	+46	+9.68	-162	-31.09
Longhorsley	468	488	474	+20	+4.27	-14	-2.87
Matfen	485	432	437	-53	-10.93	+5	+1.15
Stamfordham	951	1186	915	+235	+24.71	-271	-22,84
Rochester (Byrness)	379	554	434	+175	+46.17	-120	-21.66
Wark (Stonehaugh)	690	683	689	-7	-1.01	+6	+0.87
Coanwood	393	284	208	-109	-27.74	-76	-26.76
Knarsdale with Kirkhaugh	368	277	234	-91	-24.73	-43	-15.52
Newbrough	451	607	527	+156	+34.59	-80	-13.18
Wall	522	444	423	-78	-14.94	-21	-4.73

N.B. 1981 figures for parishes not available in January 1983.

Source: Office of Population Censuses and Surveys. 1982.

An examination of these figures shows that the percentage population change between 1961 and 1971 is - 14.02 on average (mean) for those villages without schools, and -16.3 for those with schools. So there appears to be little difference between the two categories. However, the varying dates of school closures make this a less-than-ideal basis for drawing conclusions.

A graphed comparison of the populations of each pair of villages (with and without schools) is given in Figure 4

Each of the villages was visited on two occasions in an attempt to gain a general impression of the state of community life.

These impressions are summarised in Tables 19 to 38, on pages 125 to 144, with villages retaining their schools appearing on green sheets, and villages which have lost their schools on red.

Table 18 below indicates the date of closure of schools in Case Study villages, together with the numbers on roll at the time of closure:

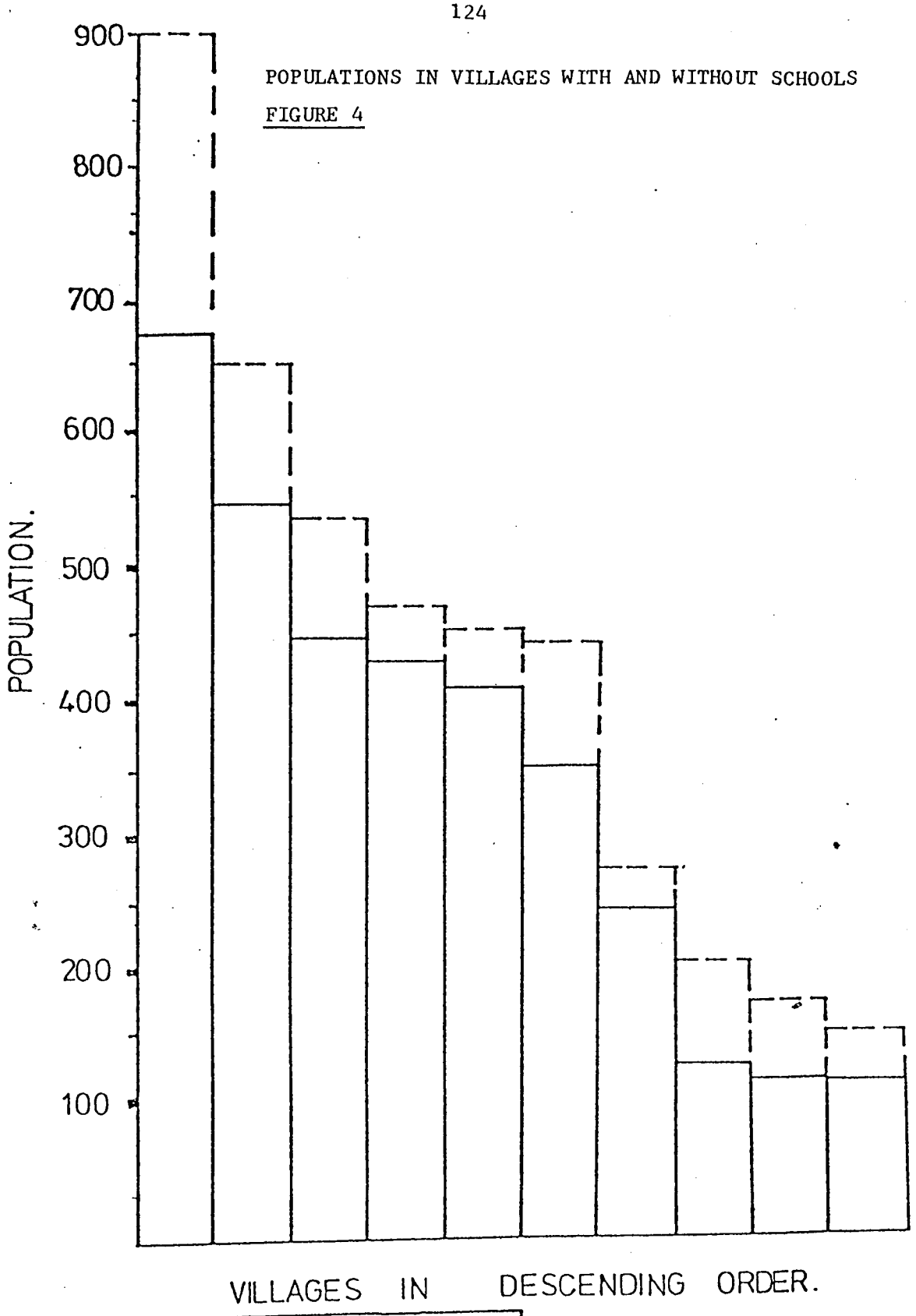
Table 18

SCHOOL	DATE OF CLOSURE	NO. ON ROLL
Alwinton	1965	3
Bowsden	1963	25
Branxton	1965	37
Stonehaugh	No accurate records	
Carham	1976	26
Knaresdale/Kirkhaugh	1977	2
Longframlington	1963	56
Longhirst	1965	40
Matfen	1971	8
Wall	1971	31

Source: Northumberland Local Education Authority. 1982.

POPULATIONS IN VILLAGES WITH AND WITHOUT SCHOOLS

FIGURE 4



KEY.

Adapted from Census 1971 - Northumberland (Part 1), H.M.S.O. 1973.

VILLAGES WITH SCHOOLS.

VILLAGES WITHOUT SCHOOLS.

Table 19

NAME HARBOTTLE - SCHOOL POPULATION 183

Shops Small village shop

Pubs: One - The Star

Places of Worship: United Reform Church

Recreation Ground: Well-kept cricket ground No recreation ground readily visible, but possibly behind school and village hall

Doctor: - At Harbottle Castle

Garage: Only a four-star pump operative

Library: Permanent

Village Hall: Yes - in process of being re-slated (and refurbished)

Village notice board: Yes - but not particularly topical or tidy

Post Office: - Yes

Village show - No

State of public open spaces: Well kept cricket ground with teas offered to visitors - 25p.

Condition of Property: Well-kept in virtually all cases. The village has a tidy, cared-for appearance. Some delightful gardens.

Comments: Bus service

Table 20

- no school

NAME ALWINTON (includes Holystone) POPULATION 119

Shops - Relatively new village store, open on Sundays as well as during the week, no doubt for walkers etc.

Pubs: - One - The Rose and Thistle. Closed on day of visit and closed sign affixed to door.

Places of Worship: - C. of E. Parish Church

Recreation Ground: - Signs of former cricket ground, but beyond this, no recreation ground, formal or otherwise, visible.

Doctor: Outside of village

Garage: - None

Library: - Mobile

Village Hall: - No, as far as I could see

Village notice board: - No

Post Office:

Village show Yes - very important hill show. Last of the season

State of public open spaces: Little public open space and what there is not mown or cared-for, and yet not untidy and certainly in keeping with upland area.

Condition of Property: - Good on the whole. Row of council houses which may have passed into private ownership. Considerable new building under construction behind farm.

Comments: Large hill farm in village. Bus service. Former school in Low Alwinton. Now appears to be in private ownership. Large hill farm in village.

Table 21

NAME KIRKNEWTON - SCHOOL POPULATION 165

Shops - None

Pubs: - None

Places of Worship: - Parish Church. Very well-kept. Vicar has Milfield within his parish.

Recreation Ground: - None

Doctor: - Outside of village

Garage: - Nearest at Milfield

Library: - Mobile

Village Hall: - Yes - former school building

Village notice board: - Yes - in the church

Post Office: - No

Village show

State of public open spaces: - None as such, but everywhere well cared for.

Condition of Property: - Cluster of cottages around farm well-kept.

Comments: Non-nuclear village. Considers itself middle of line of hamlets. Large farm in village. Some new housing. Church school which draws from up to Border. Two families have opted to travel out of their area to go to C. of E. School.

Table 22

NAME BOWSDEN - no school POPULATION 117

Shops None

Pubs: - The Black Bull

Places of Worship: - No church

Recreation Ground: - None

Doctor: Outside village

Garage: None

Library: - Mobile

Village Hall: - Yes

Village notice board: - Yes - Only circulars

Post Office: - Yes

Village show

State of public open spaces: Very few, but overall appearance tidy.

Condition of Property: Property well kept. On the whole, small houses. Felt as though many worked in Berwick.

Comments: - Linear village. Former school in private ownership. Bus service. Large farm in centre of village.

Table 23

NAME	MILFIELD - School	POPULATION	268

Shops: Post office and Spar combined
Saddlers

Pubs: Red Lion (with Bed and Breakfast) Cafe

Places of Worship: Methodist Church. Part of Kirknewton C. of E. Parish.

Recreation Ground: School playing field

Doctor: Outside

Garage: Petrol and service and sale of tractors

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes

Village notice board: Yes - uninteresting

Post Office: Yes

Village show No

State of public open spaces: Very well-kept. Large rose bed

Condition of Property: Largely Council. Very well kept. Gardens very attractive.

Comments: Nuclear village lying to west of Wooler/Coldstream road. Large farm in village. There was large former Agricultural Engineers. Former school now village hall. Bus service. Milfield reading room - members only?

Table 24

NAME	BRANXTON - no school	POPULATION	138

Shops: Limited village stores in Post Office

Pubs:

Places of Worship: St. Paul's Parish Church. (Flodden Field Church) - very well cared for, but doubt if regular services. Tiny tin chapel.

Recreation Ground: Mainly for small children with swings

Doctor: Outside village

Garage: Petrol

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes

Village notice board: Lively borad in PostOffice/shop

Post Office: Yes

Village show: No

State of public open spaces: Fair

Condition of Property: Mixed housing, all well-kept

Comments: Nuclear village. Bus service. Joiner and carpenter contractor. Former school now village hall.

Table 25

NAME BYRNESS school POPULATION 434

Shops Small General Store in addition to Post Office

Pubs: The Byrness Hotel - small residential and local bar (Cafe at garage) 3/4 miles from Forestry village

Places of Worship: Parish church - member of Bellingham group

Recreation Ground: Largely children's area but swings, roundabout and seats plus football pitch.

Doctor: In village - surgery in village hall Tuesday and Friday for ½ hour

Garage: Petrol plus cafe

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: yes

Village notice board: no

Post Office: yes

Village show No

State of public open spaces: Owned by and well-maintained by Forestry Commission. Picnic areas. Forestry village public open spaces less well-kept.

Condition of Property: Largely Foretry - 1930's. Rented - effectively tied cottages. Neat in places but signs of neglect and lack of care

Comments: On Pennine Way - YHA, National Park Information centre. Nuclear village (forestry) and old main road village. Former C. of E. village school on main road. Redesdale Forest Office. Caravan and camping site - Forestry. Ministry of Defence Training area to east of original village. Bus service.

Table 26

NAME STONEHAUGH (within Wark Parish) No school POPULATION 680

Shops Post office - village shop combined

Pubs: None - Wark village nearest

Places of Worship: Apparently no place of worship.

Recreation Ground: Open spaces rather than recreation ground. Small play area with swings etc.

Doctor: Outside of village

Garage: None

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes

Village notice board: No - Forestry noticeboards for visitors

Post Office: Yes

Village show No

State of public open spaces: Picnic areas and public open spaces well maintained by Forestry Commission. Wark Forest Centre Offices.

Condition of Property: Good on the whole. Much better appearance than Byrness.

Comments: 'Old School House' by turning into village. Holiday homes. Camping and caravan site. Derelict 'Craftworks'.

Table 27

NAME HORNCLIFFE - School POPULATION 359

Shops Village shop

Pubs: The Fishers' Arms

Places of Worship: United Reform Church and Hall

Recreation Ground: New School playing field and recreation ground with swings by old school

Doctor: Outside village

Garage:

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes - two - one former school

Village notice board: Quite interesting. WI noticeboard

Post Office: Yes

Village show No

State of public open spaces: Fairly tidy on the whole but rather rough round prefab village hall

Condition of Property: Very mixed and equally mixed in appearance.

Comments: Nuclear village. Very mixed housing. Very much a working village. Bus service. New school with playing field. small haulage company. Joiner and builder. Former school was library now village hall with youth club. Public footpaths well marked.

Table 28

NAME	CARHAM - no school	POPULATION	414

Shops: Village stores in Wark

Pubs:

Places of Worship: Parish Church - ill kempt

Recreation Ground: Swing in grounds of village hall. Tennis court - public?

Doctor: Outside village

Garage: Petrol and service in Wark

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes

Village notice board: Yes - but unused

Post Office: Yes - in Wark

Village show: No

State of public open spaces: Good in both villages

Condition of Property: Estate houses, well-kept. Property in Wark small scale - well-cared for

Comments: Linear, estate village. Large house. Bus service. Home farm. No evidence of former school. Assume this was in Wark and appears to be in private ownership. Blacksmith in Wark.

Table 29

NAME COANWOOD (Parish includes Lambley) School POPULATION 209

Shops Only travelling shop

Pubs: None. Nearest in Featherstone.

Places of Worship: None as far as could see. Parish Church in Lambley.

Recreation Ground: None except school playground as far as could see.

Doctor: Outside village

Garage:

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: No.

Village notice board: No.

Post Office: Yes

Village show Yes

State of public open spaces: None as such but verges tidy

Condition of Property: Good

Comments: Dispersed village. Newish council houses by Herdley Bank School. Former railway station. Now footpath. New road connection with Lambley. Large farm in old section of village. Influence of Featherstone Castle.

Table 30

NAME KNARESDALE WITH KIRKHAUGH POPULATION 239

No school

Shops Post Office and village store in Slaggyford

Pubs: One in Knarsdale. Good noticeboard - Two bed and breakfast in Slaggyford

Places of Worship: Parish Church in Knarsdale and Kirkhaugh. Methodist Church in Slaggyford.

Recreation Ground: None seen

Doctor: Outside of village - Haltwhistle?

Garage: None seen

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes in Knarsdale

Village notice board: Yes in Knarsdale

Post Office: No

Village show No

State of public open spaces: Well-kept village green in Slaggyford

Condition of Property: Property well-cared for throughout.

Comments: This parish is essentially a string of hamlets, the largest now being Slaggyford. Former mining area. Knarsdale - Active Leek Club. Village panto. Bus service. Slaggyford - Former station - engine preserved. Model railway in private garden. Former school in private ownership. Kirkhaugh now essentially one farm along gated road. Wesleyan Chapel

Table 31

NAME FELTON - school POPULATION 655

Shops: General stores. Butchers and greengrocers and small grover combined. Ironmongery. Grocers and off-licence. Newsagent and confectioner. 3 Antique shops.

Pubs: The Northumberland Arms and the Stag's Head. The former technically in Thirston. Cafe and other cafe to open during season - two bed and breakfasts.

Places of Worship: United Reform Church (Felton but actually in Thirston). Very ancient C. of E. Church. Disused chapel.

Recreation Ground: New recreation ground recently seeded with secure fence to be drained. Cricket, football and swings etc. to go there. Cricket club and ground in existence.

Doctor: In village

Garage: 2 main road (A1). Private haulier with petrol pumps within Felton

Library: Mobile library - was permanent in Thirston in former primary school, but now closed

Village Hall: Primary school, but now closed

Village notice board: - Not as such but general stores window very good substitute. Lively notices.

Post Office: Yes

Village show: Leek and Onion show

State of public open spaces: War memorial fairly well cared for. Public open spaces around council estate a disgrace.

Condition of Property: Council estate well cared for on the whole. Village clearly suffers from main-road pollution. Those properties off main road much better kept.

Comments: Local History Society. Felton/Thirston. Youth Club. Ladies Keep Fit Club. W.I. British Legion. Milk Marketing Board, cattle breeding sub-station - former reading rooms now private house. Former plant hire firm. Now small engineering works. Bus service. Former R.C. School now private house. Essentially linear village on A1. By-pass in course of construction. Senior Citizens club - notice in private garden.

Table 32

NAME LONGFRAMLINGTON - No school POPULATION 547

Shops Mace foodstore. Butchers. Post Office and Newsagent. Antique shop and some clothes.

Pubs: 2 pubs: The Granby and The New Inn Bed and Breakfast.

Places of Worship: United Reform Church. Parish Church

Recreation Ground: Large, well cared for and well equipped playing fields and swings etc.

Doctor: outside village

Garage: petrol and service, outside village centre, off main road. Service garage only near recreation ground.

Library: - Permanent - in former village school. 2.00 - 4.30 p.m. Monday and 6.30 - 8.00 Thursday

Village Hall: Yes - War Memorial Hall and Church Room

Village notice board: Yes - two outside library - fairly lively

Post Office: Yes

Village show No

State of public open spaces: Area around War Memorial Hall a little untidy. Other open spaces well-kept.

Condition of Property: On the whole property was well-kept. Some properties immediately on main road clearly blighted as a result but old part of village off main road particularly neat with good gardens.

Comments: Nuclear village although astride main Morpeth/Coldstream A697. Recent private development and earlier council development Police station. Bus service. Several Cheviot Defence Action Group stickers in house windows. Pump to commerate George V and Queen Mary coronation. 1911. Boarding Kennels. Cemetary. Allotments. WI. Women's Fellowship. Small pip maker in village. Enters best kept village competition.

Table 33

NAME	LONGHORSLEY - school	POPULATION	474

Shops: Village stores including newsagent and off-licence. Smart clothes/outdoor wear shop/hunting kit. Post office and stores. Butchers. Saddlers

Pubs: Shoulder of Mutton which runs Leek Club. One bed and breakfast.

Places of Worship: Undenominational church. C. of E. former Parish Church and burial ground one mile from village. Parish Church now in former school (from 1964) R.C. church by big (Pele) house

Recreation Ground: Very well-kept with slide etc., and cricket/football area. Also Longhorsley Common.

Doctor: In Village

Garage: Service

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes

Village notice board: Reference to ownership of green common.

Post Office: Yes

Village show: Horse show and leek show

State of public open spaces: Most open spaces well-kept. Village green a bit rough.

Condition of Property: Very mixed housing well-maintained on the whole. Small, well-kept council estate. New,private (expensive) estate on edge of village.

Comments: Nuclear village - New First School. Large part of former now in private ownership. C. of E. parish church in other section. Police station. Planning permission for new vicarage sought. Agricultural - motor engineer by the recreation ground. Very small market garden. Mini bus - bus service.

Table 34

NAME LONGHIRST - no school POPULATION 359

Shops None

Pubs: None

Places of Worship: C. of E. Parish Church

Recreation Ground: None readily seen

Doctor: Outside village

Garage: None

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes - former school

Village notice board: Yes in bus shelter. Poorly kept

Post Office: Yes

Village show No

State of public open spaces: Well-kept war memorial. Area surrounding village hall ill-kempt.

Condition of Property: Expensively well-maintained.

Comments: Longhirst Hall School - private. Former estate village. Bus service. Large Fresian herd farm on edge of village. Linear village.

Table 35

NAME STAMFORDHAM - school POPULATION 915

Shops Spar Grocers plus Post Office. General Stores. Butchers

Pubs: Swinburne Arms - The Bay Horse

Places of Worship: Parish Church. United Reform Church. Methodist Chapel

Recreation Ground: Yes - attached to new school

Doctor: In village - practice of 4, four days per week

Garage: Petrol and service - coaches - cattle trucks for hire (Bells)

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes - very well kept old school

Village notice board: yes

Post Office: Yes

Village show Yes

State of public open spaces: Excellent. Well mown and tidy. Two signs on village green welcoming visitors and requesting no litter.

Condition of Property: Very good all round. Both private and council well cared for. Some imaginative new building which fits in well. Old folks' bungalows.

Comments: Butter Cross - former market. Police Station. Barclay's Bank. Gaol. New School. Bus service.

Enters best kept village competition. Former shop for sale Mother and toddler group.

Table 36

NAME MATFEN - no school POPULATION 437

Shops General stores

Pubs: The Black Bull. Overnight accommodation in large house next to pub.

Places of Worship: Parish Church - Holy Trinity. (Rev. Allan Higgs, Stamfordham) Methodist Church

Recreation Ground:

Doctor: Outside village

Garage: Petrol only

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes - former school

Village notice board: Yes - untidy Agenda of Parish Council

Post Office: Yes

Village show No

State of public open spaces: Stream and green well cared for.

Condition of Property: Very good. New development taking place below church. Might well turn out to be in keeping. Superior 4 bedroomed houses - Bellway Homes.

Comments: Former estate village. (Matfen Hall). Cricket Club. Forge at one time. Bus service. Cheshire Home in Hall.

Table 37

NAME	NEWBROUGH (includes Fourstones)	POPULATION	527

School

Shops: Small village shop with limited opening hours. Evidence of former shop

Pubs: Red Lion

Places of Worship:

Recreation Ground: Cricket and football ground on Newbrough Hall land.

Doctor: Outside village

Garage: Service in village - petrol station ½ mile east within Fourstones village sign posts.

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes - former Town Hall

Village notice board: Yes - untidy and uninformative on the whole

Post Office:

Village show: Yes - produce show with Warden

State of public open spaces: No public open spaces within old "private" village. Those in 'council care' well-kept.

Condition of Property: All good.

Comments: Post Office and stores in Fourstones. Methodist Chapel and C. of E. Church in Fourstones. Railway Pub , Market Gardening at Fourstones.
Former estate village with (very) recent council/private additions. Nuclear village, though school and much property beyond centre and joining up with Fourstones. Two large farms, presumably estate at one time. Bus service.

Table 38

NAME WALL - no school POPULATION 423

Shops Village shop and Post Office - shop clearly limited

Pubs: The Hadrian

Places of Worship: Parish Church of St. George. Former Weslyan Chapel. now village hall.

Recreation Ground: Yes. Large well-kept open area and swings for younger children

Doctor: Outside village

Garage: Service

Library: Mobile

Village Hall: Yes - Wall Reading room

Village notice board: Yes - Notice of next Parish Council meeting up.

Post Office: Yes

Village show Yes

State of public open spaces: Very good indeed. Large village green, well-mown. Pump and war memorial.

Condition of Property: Very good in every respect - houses, welding shop, church and pub.

Comments: Nuclear village. Large village green. Former Smithy now sizeable electric welding works. Also large farm in village centre.

A record of services available in the villages is shown in computerised form in Table 39 Villages numbered 1 to 10 have lost their schools: villages 11 to 20 retain theirs:

Table 39

Services in the Village

A Comparison of villages with and without schools

1.	119	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	Alwinton
2.	117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	Bowsden
3.	138	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	Branxton
4.	680	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	Stonehaugh
5.	414	0	3	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	Carham
6.	239	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	Knaresdale/Kirkhaugh
7.	547	0	4	2	2	1	0	1	1	1	Longframlington
8.	359	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	Longhirst
9.	437	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	Matfen
10.	423	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	Wall
11.	183	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	Harbottle
12.	165	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	Kirknewton
13.	268	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	Milfield
14.	434	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Byreness
15.	359	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	Horncliffe
16.	209	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	Herdley Bank/Coanwood
17.	655	1	6	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	Felton
18.	474	1	5	2	2	1	0	1	0	1	Longhorsley
19.	515	1	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	Stamfordham
20.	527	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	Newbrough

How to read table

Column 1 Village number

Column 2 Population of village

Column 3-11 To indicate if a particular service is present in the village and the number of outlets if present:

3 School

4 Shop/s

5 Pub/s

6 Church/s

7 Recreation Ground

8 Doctor

9 Garage/s

10 Village hall

11 Post office

A different presentation of Table 38 which also permits a comparison of data on services in the two categories of village is contained in Figure 5. The numbers of each service in the two categories have been added to produce totals.

Table 40 brings together populations and services in the two categories:

Table 40

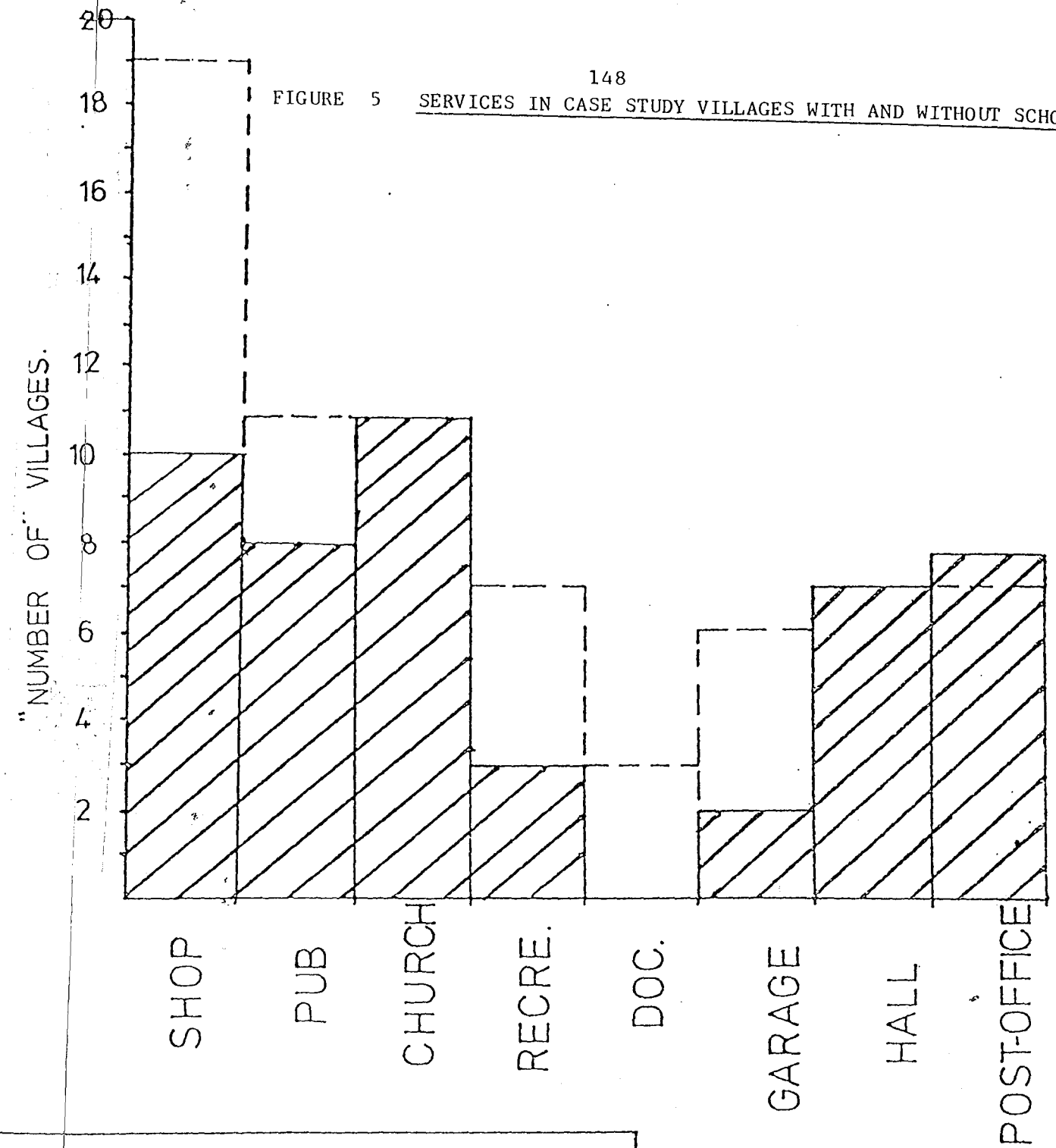
	Villages with school	Villages without school
Total population of 10 villages	4189	3473
Mean population	418.9	347.3
Average (mean) number of service outlets	7	4.7
Average (mean) number of types of service outlet	5.4	3.7

From this simple comparison it would seem that villages without schools are on average slightly smaller and have fewer service outlets. However, one cannot say if school closure makes the situation worse, or if closure is a sympton of a more general decline in the village. In other words, one cannot determine the direction of causality.

4.5.2. Case Studies - Community Usage of Schools

A survey was made of each of the nine schools in this investigation, to determine the incidence of community use of school premises. The results appear in summarised form in Table 41 on page 149.

FIGURE 5 SERVICES IN CASE STUDY VILLAGES WITH AND WITHOUT SCHOOLS



4.5.2. Case Studies - Community Usage of Schools

A survey was made of each of the nine schools in this investigation, to determine the incidence of community use of school premises. The results appear in summarised form in Table 41.

Table 41

School	Usage	Comments
Harbottle C. of E.	Rarely used by the Community	Building inadequate Lively village hall next door
Kirknewton C. of E.	Elections, plus school functions	The former school has been used as a village hall for 17 years
Milfield	Senior Youth Club (weekly) W.I. (monthly) Parish Council (quarterly) Carpet Bowls (twice weekly) Plus school functions	There is no village hall Community would welcome more use of the canteen in the old school building if a licence could be obtained.
Byrness	Youth Clubs Evening Classes Parish Council Plus school functions	School used more when village hall unavailable
Horncliffe	School functions	Village hall used for most community events
Herdley Bank	School functions, plus occasional use by community	
Longhorsley C. of E.	Keep Fit (weekly) Brownies (weekly) Youth Club (weekly) W.I. (monthly) Senior Citizens (monthly) Parish Council (monthly) Plus church/school functions	
Stamfordham	2 evening classes (weekly) Young Farmers (weekly) Guides (weekly) Brownies (weekly) Plus school functions	Old School building used as village hall. Head encourages its use
Newbrough C. of E.	Evening Class (weekly) Sunday School (occasional) Parish Council (every 2 months) Plus church/school functions	Newbrough Town Hall used for most functions

Table 41 suggests that where a hall exists, the school usage is limited. Perhaps the expense of hiring enters into this, as well as restrictions on activities in schools and the minuteness of furniture in first schools. Church schools appear to play host to parents on a regular basis. The overall picture which emerges is that there is potential for enhanced community use of school premises, services, equipment and grounds.

4.5.3. Conclusions

Villages with schools tend to be larger and possess more services than villages which have lost their schools. It is not possible to assume that the presence or absence of a school is a causal factor.

School premises are generally underused for community purposes.

4.6 The Investigation - Interviews

Fieldwork in villages was undertaken during the winter of 1980 and the spring of 1981. 126 people were interviewed in 19 villages. An average of 50 minutes was spent on each interview. Ages of respondents varied from 24 to 79. There were 39 men and 87 women. Length of residence in the villages ranged from newcomers to those who had lived in the same place for over 70 years. The mean number of years residence was:

For villages with a school 26.7 years

For villages without a school 20.6 years

Visits were made to villages on 53 occasions. Failure to find people at home occasioned 17 second calls and 6 third calls. There were 4 non-respondents. They were people who had moved house and could not be traced easily. The danger of bias with a non-response rate of 3.1% was not considered sufficiently serious to warrant procedures such as those of Kish [122], or the re-weighting method of Gray, Corlett and

[122] KISH, L. A Procedure for Objective Respondent Selection within the Household. Journal of the American Statistical Association. New York. 1949.

Frankland.[123]

The questionnaire was revised three times, as a result of testing in two lively Cumbrian villages where a robust response could be anticipated. The design is illustrated on pages 152 and 153.

A specimen questionnaire is included as appendix 2. The strength of responses was ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, as perceived by the interviewer. High scoring indicated a respondent's notable esteem for rural schools as contributors to the social life of villages, and as catalysts for a thriving community. Respondents were judged to have avoided the extremes of 1 and 5 in the rating scales, a common occurrence as indicated by Moser and Kalton.[124]

[123] GRAY, P.G., CORLETT, T. and FRANKLAND, P. The Register of Electors as a Sampling Frame. Government Social Survey (M 60) London 1951.

[124] MOSER, C.A. and KALTON, G. Survey Methods in Social Investigation. London 1971.

QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Informational Section 1.

i. What is your age?

ii. Have you any children?
If so, what are their ages?

iii. How long have you lived here?

iv. Must you live here, or is it by choice?

v. Do you like living here?

B. Attitudinal Section 1. All respondents

1. Why/Why do you not like living here?
2. Is the village a friendly place?
3. Has it an active social life?
4. Why do you think this is?
5. Which village organisation, facility or service contributes most to your own social life?
6. Who, in your village, is the person who gets things done?

C. Attitudinal Section 2.

Respondents with schools

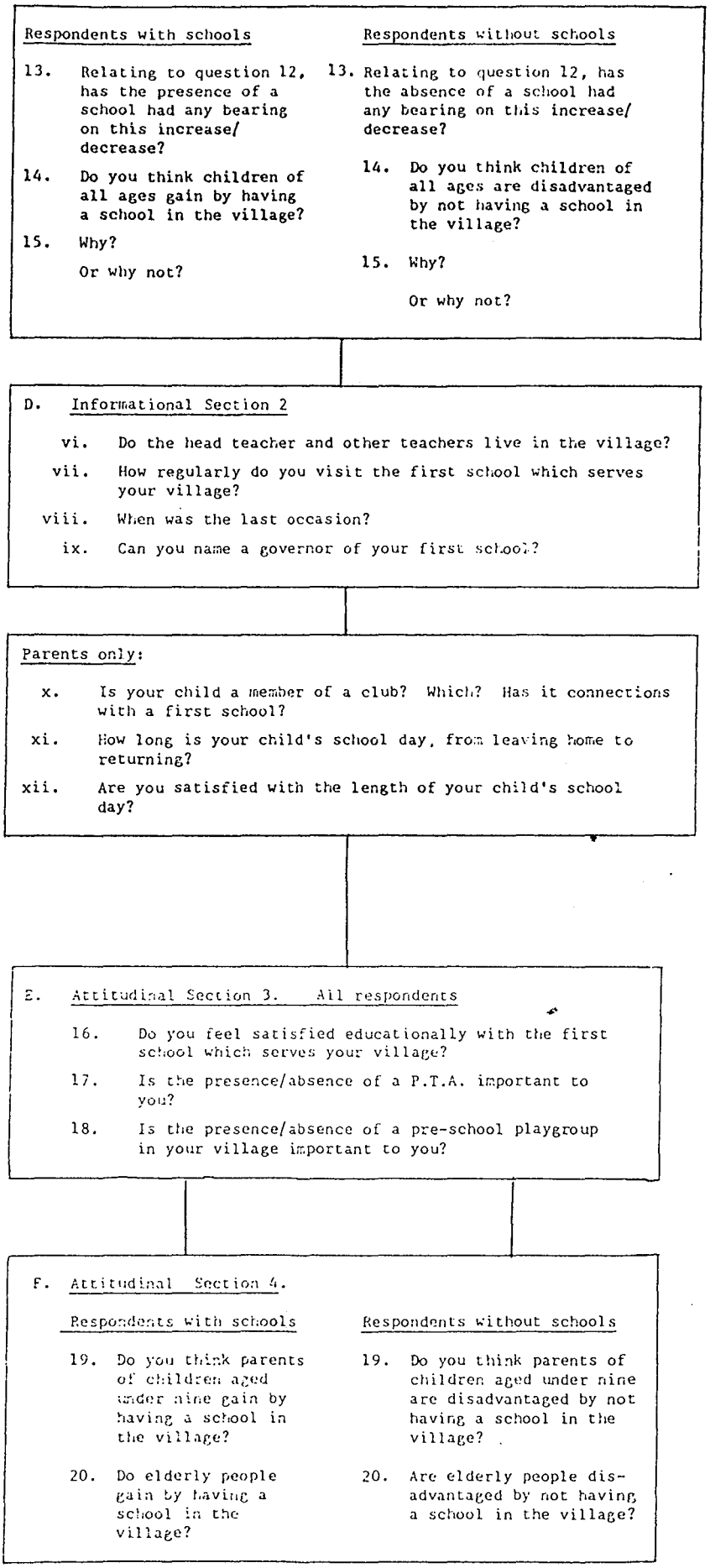
7. Does your school contribute to the social life of the village?
8. Does your school now contribute more, or less, than in former times?
9. What single thing would you miss most if your school was closed?
10. As well as a school you have a shop/surgery/post office/bus service/pub/mobile library etc. Of all your amenities which three would you miss most, in order of priority?

Respondents without schools

7. If there was a school here would you expect it to add to the social life of the village?
8. Did your former school contribute to the social life of the village when it was open?
9. What single thing do you miss most by not having a school in the village?
10. Although you do not have a school, you do have a shop/surgery ..... etc. Which three of these would you miss most, in order of priority?

All respondents

11. Which three village amenities that you have not got, would you most prefer?
12. The population of your village has declined/increased in the past few years. To what do you attribute this?


Respondents with schools
13. Relating to question 12, has the presence of a school had any bearing on this increase/ decrease?
14. Do you think children of all ages gain by having a school in the village?
15. Why?
Or why not?
Respondents without schools
13. Relating to question 12, has the absence of a school had any bearing on this increase/ decrease?
14. Do you think children of all ages are disadvantaged by not having a school in the village?
15. Why?
Or why not?
D. Informational Section 2
vi. Do the head teacher and other teachers live in the village?
vii. How regularly do you visit the first school which serves your village?
viii. When was the last occasion?
ix. Can you name a governor of your first school?
Parents only:
x. Is your child a member of a club? Which? Has it connections with a first school?
xi. How long is your child's school day, from leaving home to returning?
xii. Are you satisfied with the length of your child's school day?
E. Attitudinal Section 3. All respondents
16. Do you feel satisfied educationally with the first school which serves your village?
17. Is the presence/absence of a P.T.A. important to you?
18. Is the presence/absence of a pre-school playgroup in your village important to you?
F. Attitudinal Section 4.
Respondents with schools
19. Do you think parents of children aged under nine gain by having a school in the village?
20. Do elderly people gain by having a school in the village?
Respondents without schools
19. Do you think parents of children aged under nine are disadvantaged by not having a school in the village?
20. Are elderly people disadvantaged by not having a school in the village?

For the purposes of an analysis of individual responses, individual personal profile histograms were produced using Northumbrian University Computer and a line printer based on a small FORTRAN program. However, for the purposes of this study only the aggregate figures were considered, in an attempt to test the null hypothesis that there is no significant social difference between villages which have schools and those which have lost them.

From the previous analysis of village populations, it would seem that this hypothesis is tenable. Conversely, from the previous analysis of service provision in villages the hypothesis would seem to be incorrect.

The next test consisted of comparing the average response profiles of villages with schools, with those without schools. (n.b. averages for villages calculated using a small FORTRAN program).

The village averages were then graphed using a graphics program.

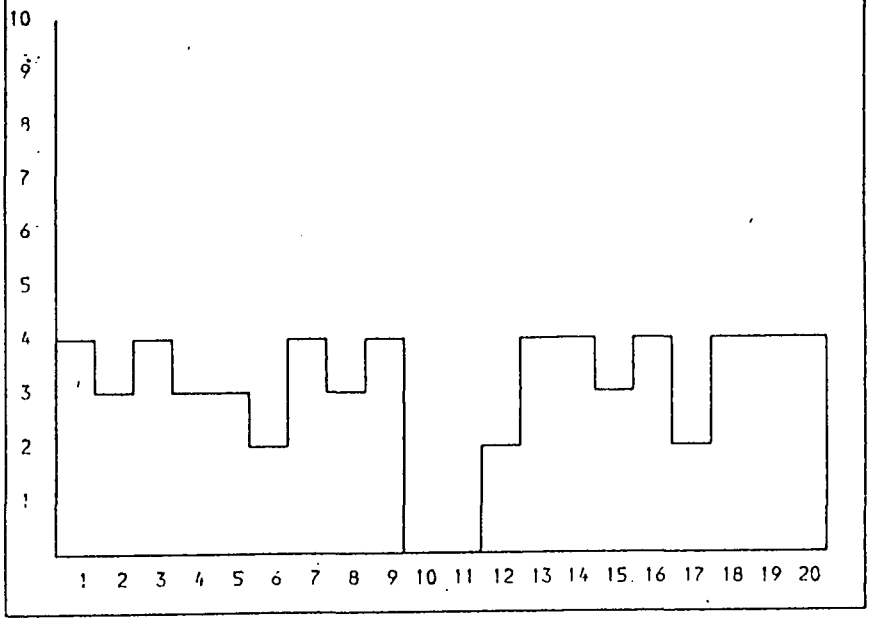
The graphs of average responses for each village follow as Figures 6 to 25 - they are paired as follows on sequential pages:

Villages with schools	Villages without schools
Harbottle	Alwinton
Kirknewton	Bowsden
Milfield	Branxton
Byrness	Stonehaugh
Horncliffe	Carham
Herdley Bank/Coanwood	Knaresdale/Kirkhaugh
Felton (no response)	Longframlington
Longhorsley	Longhirst
Stamfordham	Matfen
Newbrough	Wall

Figure 6

RESPONSE PROFILE

HARBOTTLE

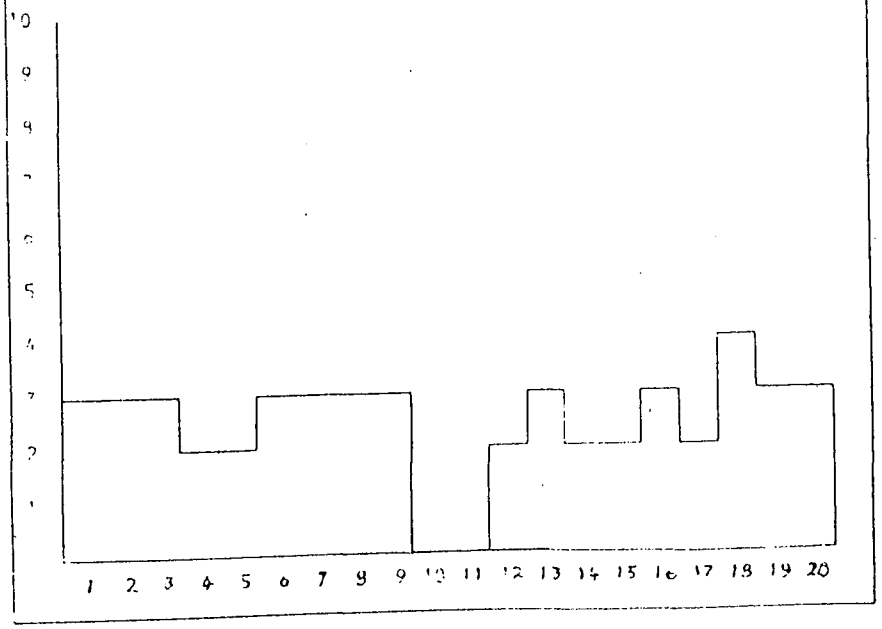


WITH SCHOOL

Figure 7

RESPONSE PROFILE

ALWINTON



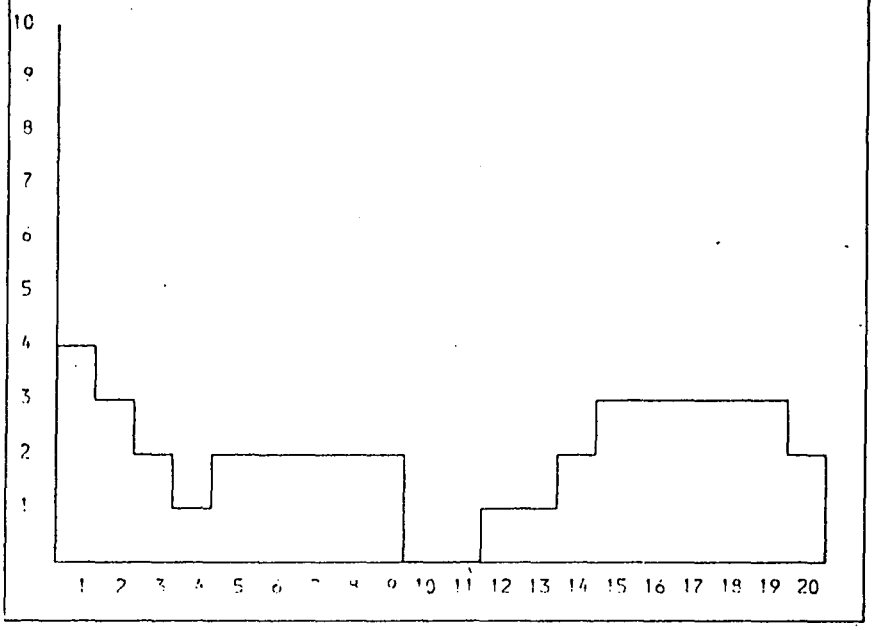
WITHOUT SCHOOL

WITH SCHOOL

Figure 8

RESPONSE PROFILE

KIRKNEWTON

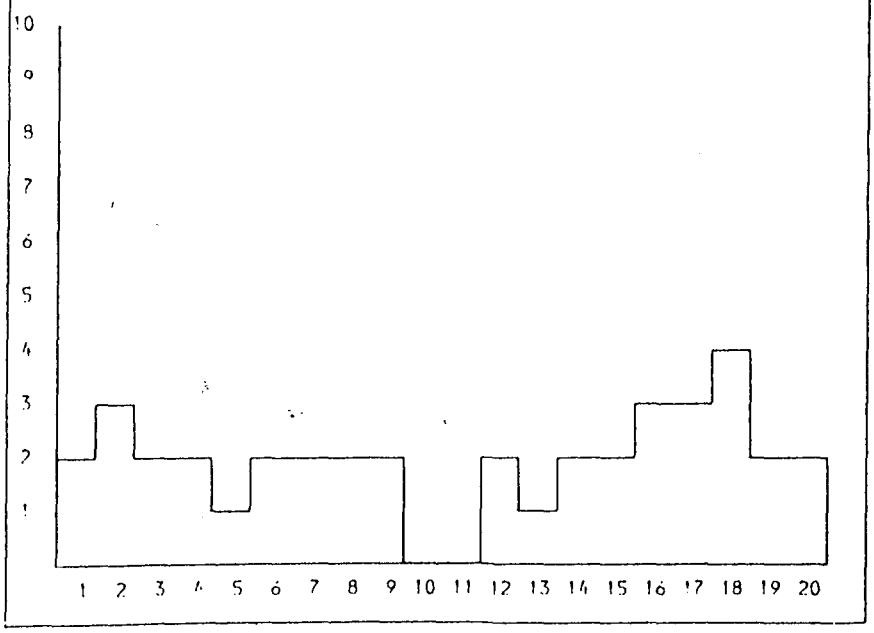


WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 9

RESPONSE PROFILE

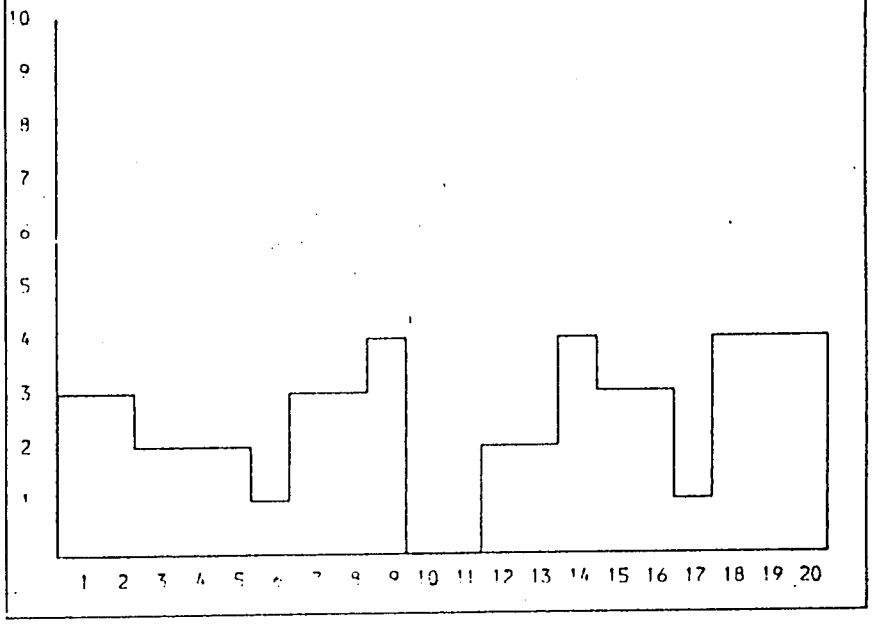
BOWSDEN



WITH SCHOOL

Figure 10
RESPONSE PROFILE

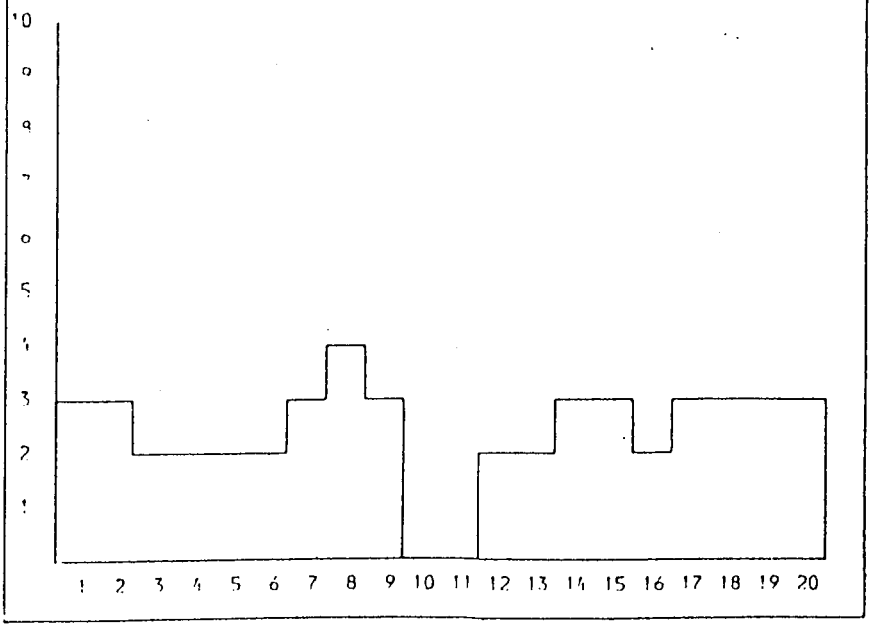
MILFIELD



WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 11
RESPONSE PROFILE

BRANXTON

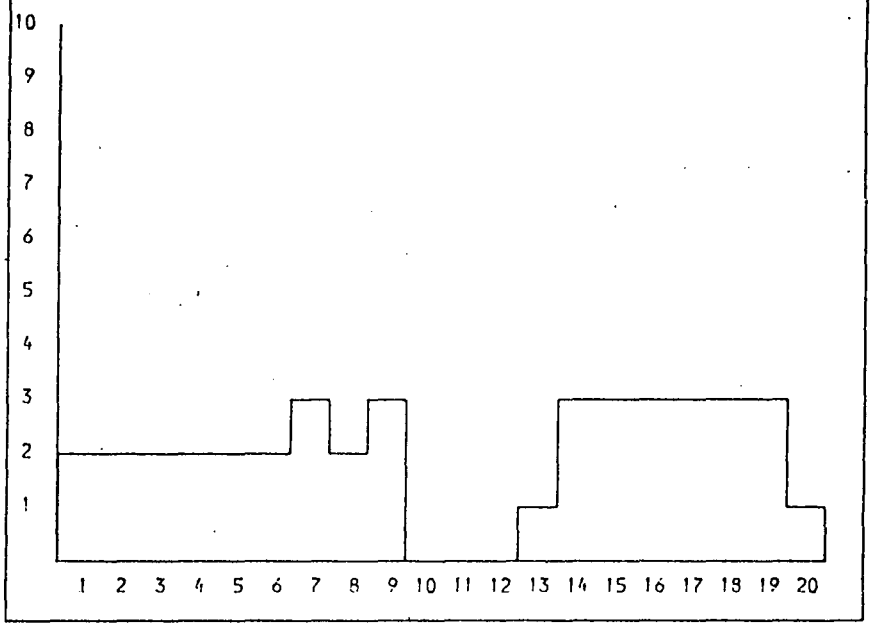


WITH SCHOOL

Figure 12

RESPONSE PROFILE

BYRNESS

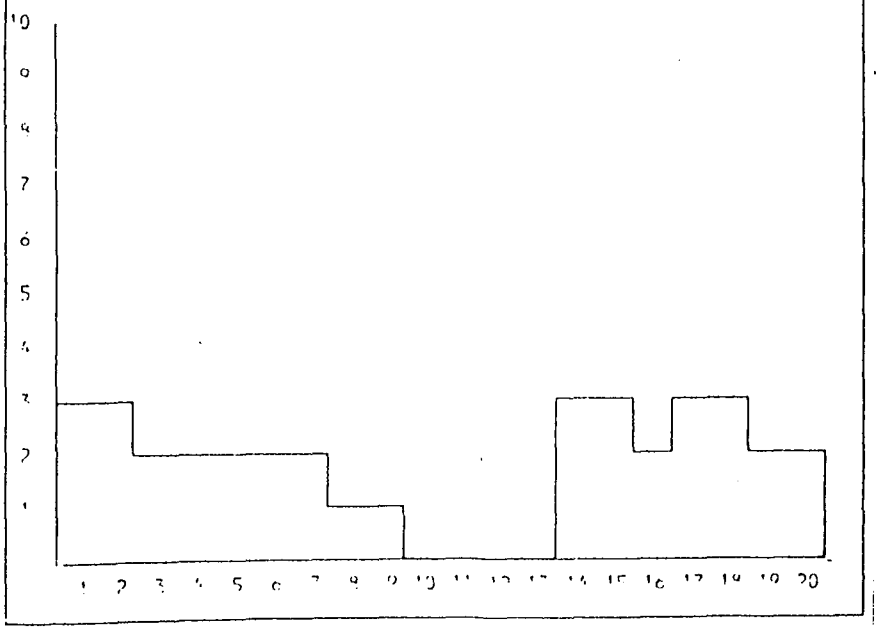


WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 13

RESPONSE PROFILE

STONEHAUGH

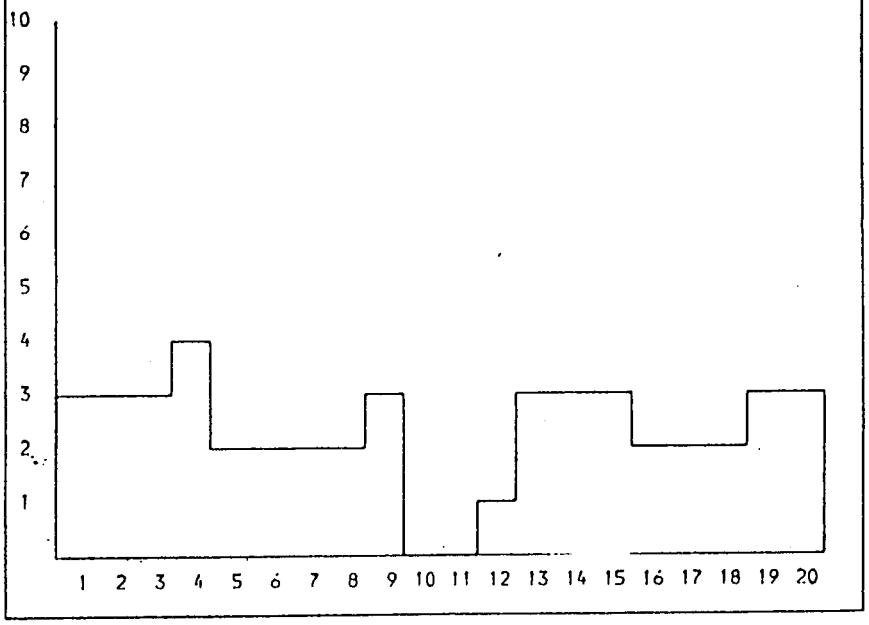


WITH SCHOOL

Figure 14

RESPONSE PROFILE

HONCLIFFE

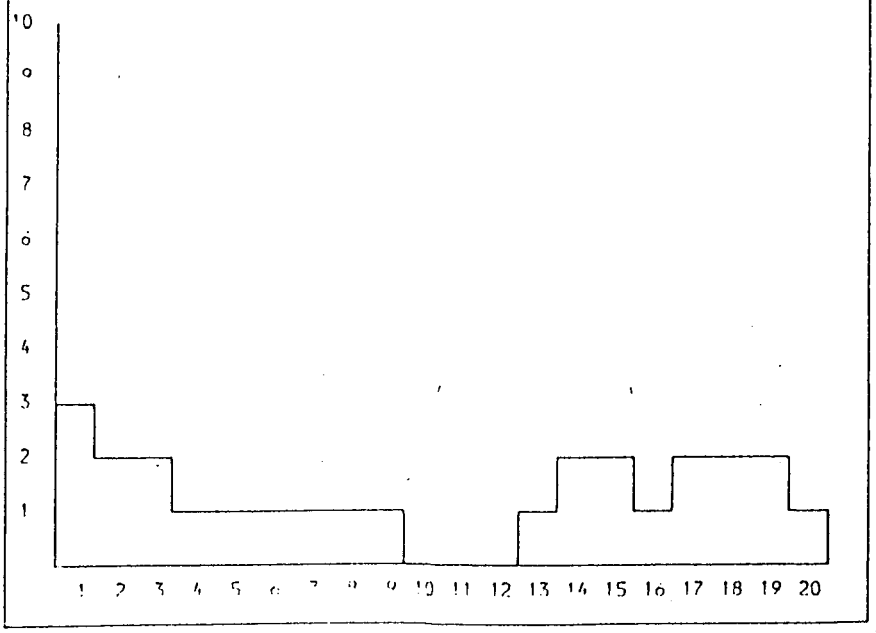


WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 15

RESPONSE PROFILE

CARHAM

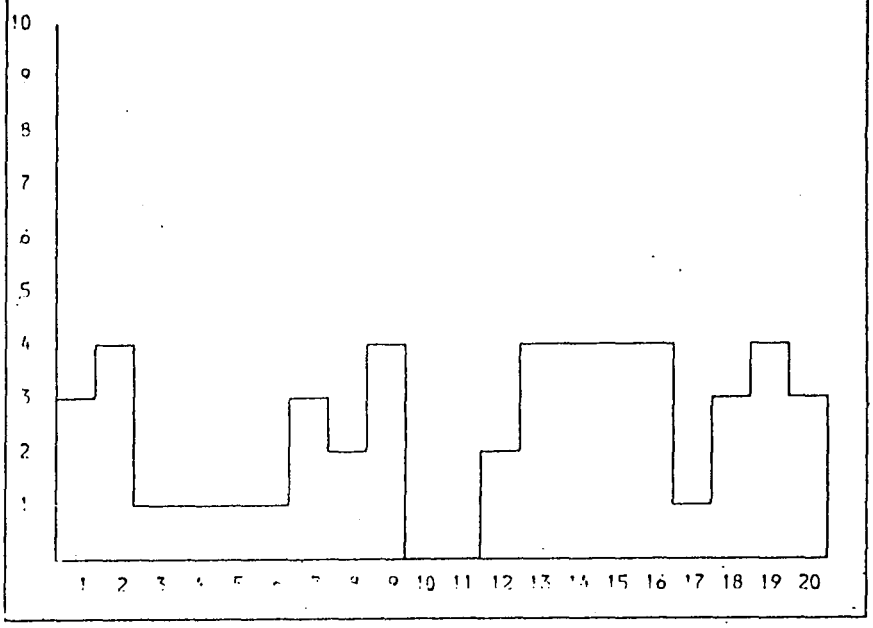


WITH SCHOOL

Figure 16

RESPONSE PROFILE

HERDLEY BANK/COANWOOD

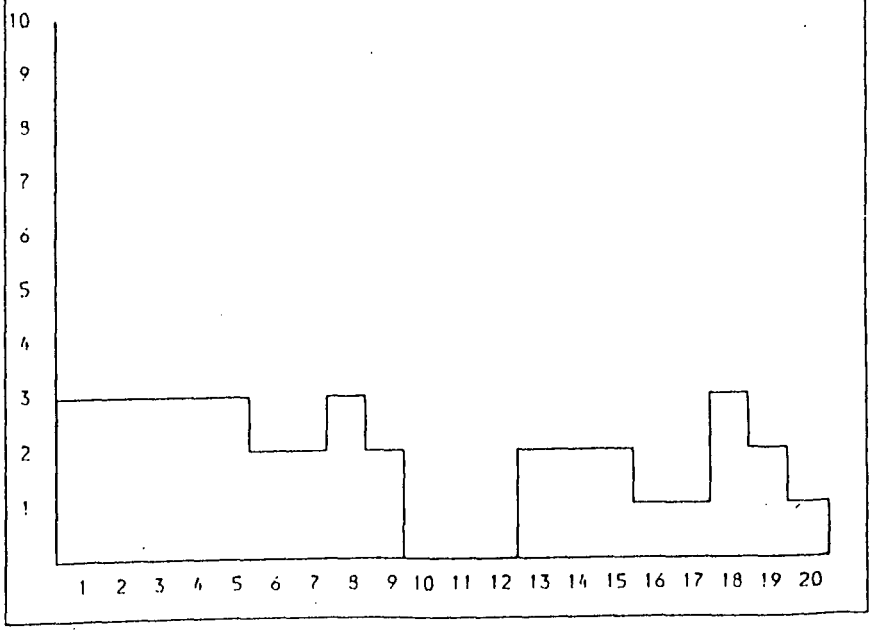


WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 17

RESPONSE PROFILE

KNARESDALE/KIRKHAUGH

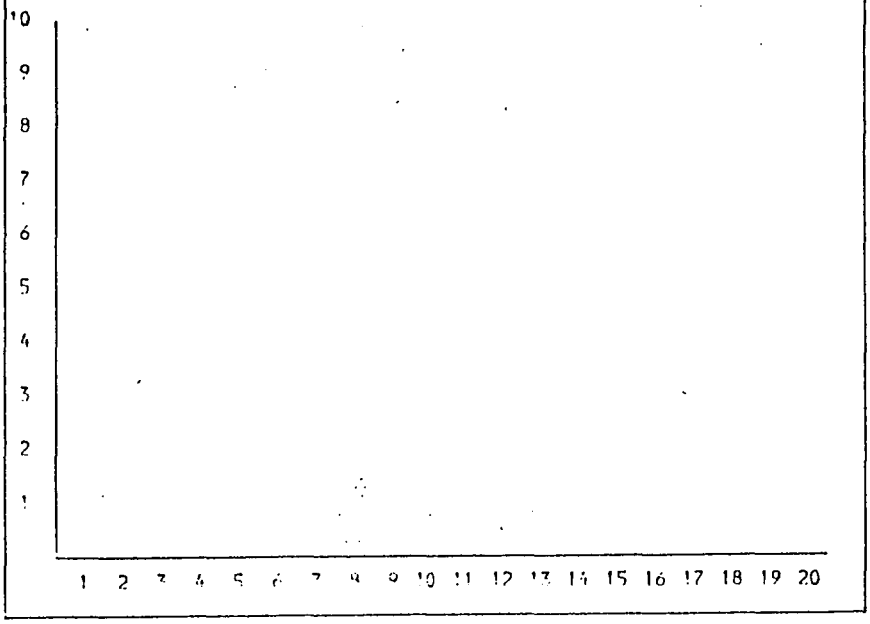


NO RESPONSE

Figure 18

RESPONSE PROFILE

FELTON

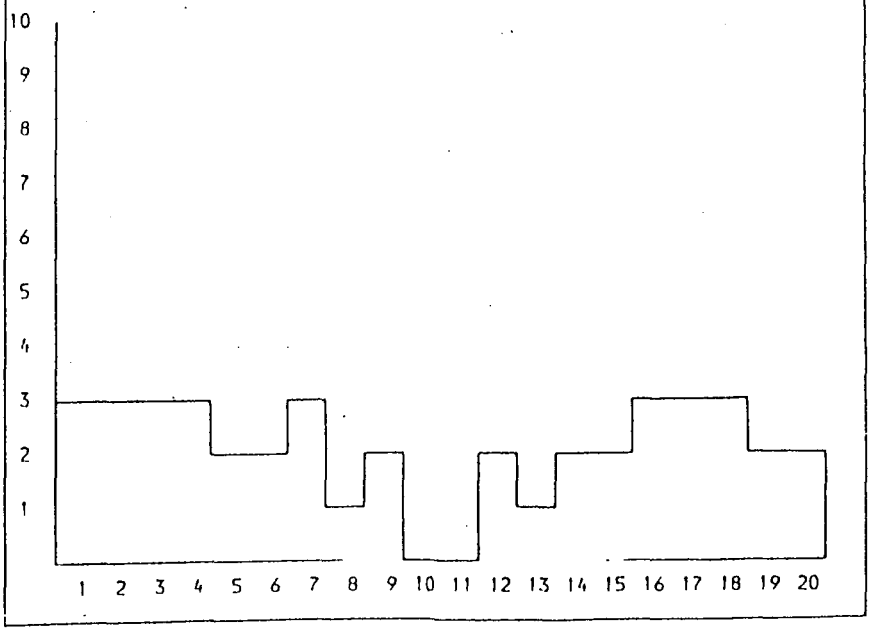


WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 19

RESPONSE PROFILE

LONGFRAMLINGTON

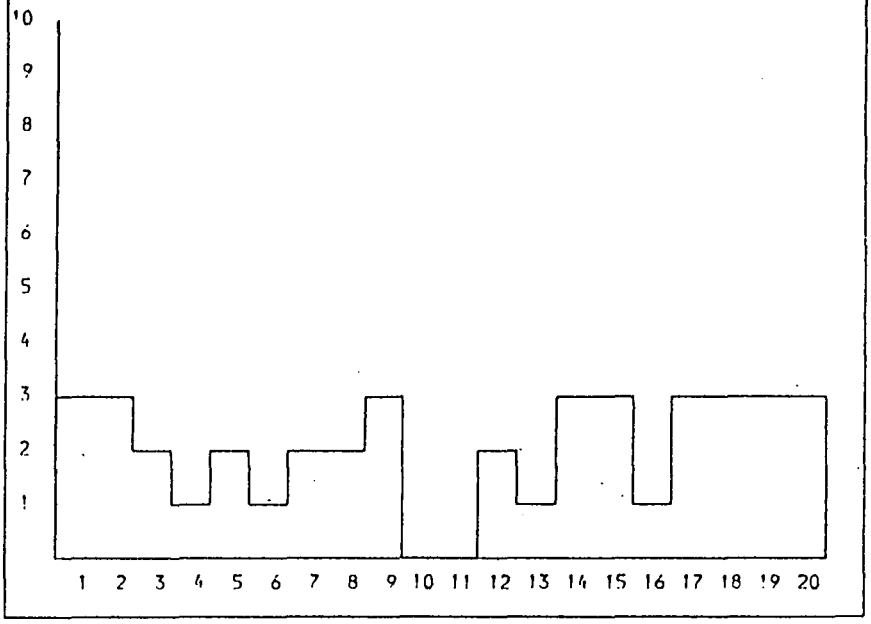


WITH SCHOOL

Figure 18

RESPONSE PROFILE

LONGHORSLEY

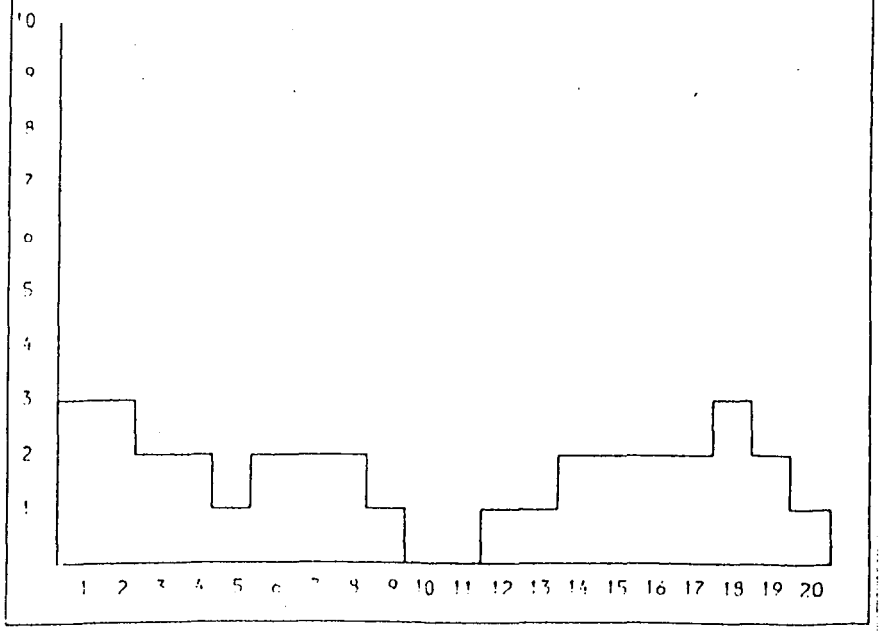


WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 19

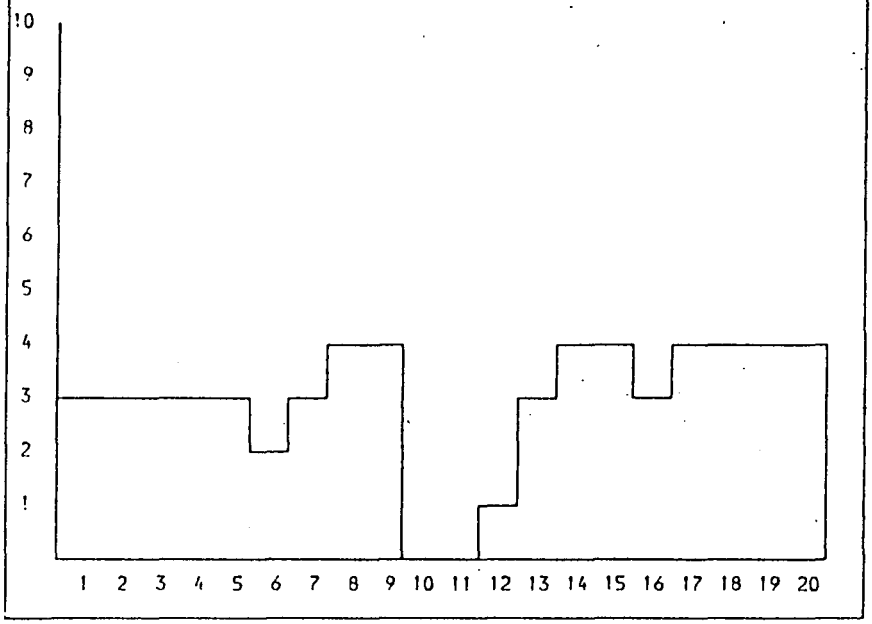
RESPONSE PROFILE

LONGHURST



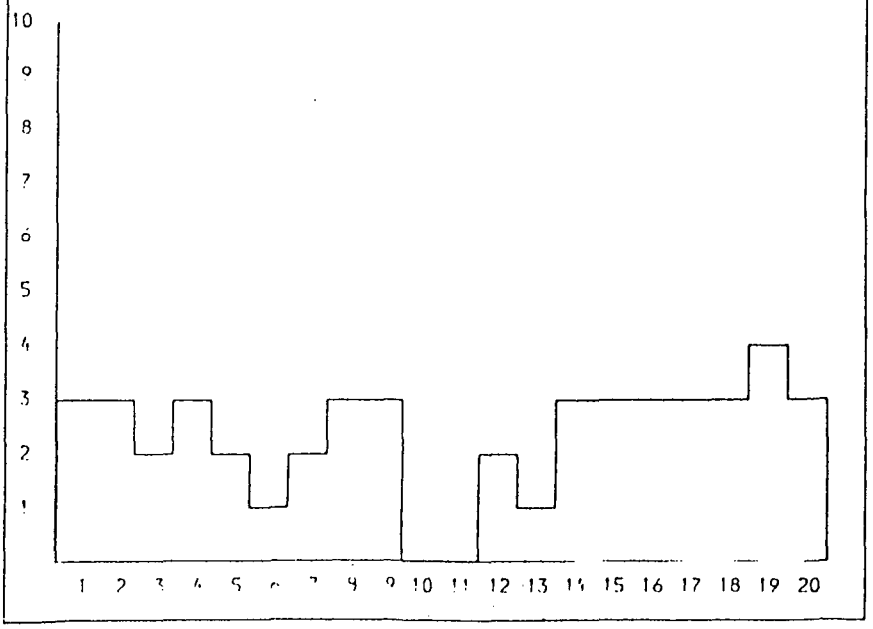
WITH SCHOOL

Figure 20
RESPONSE PROFILE
STAMFORDHAM



WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 22
RESPONSE PROFILE
MATFEN

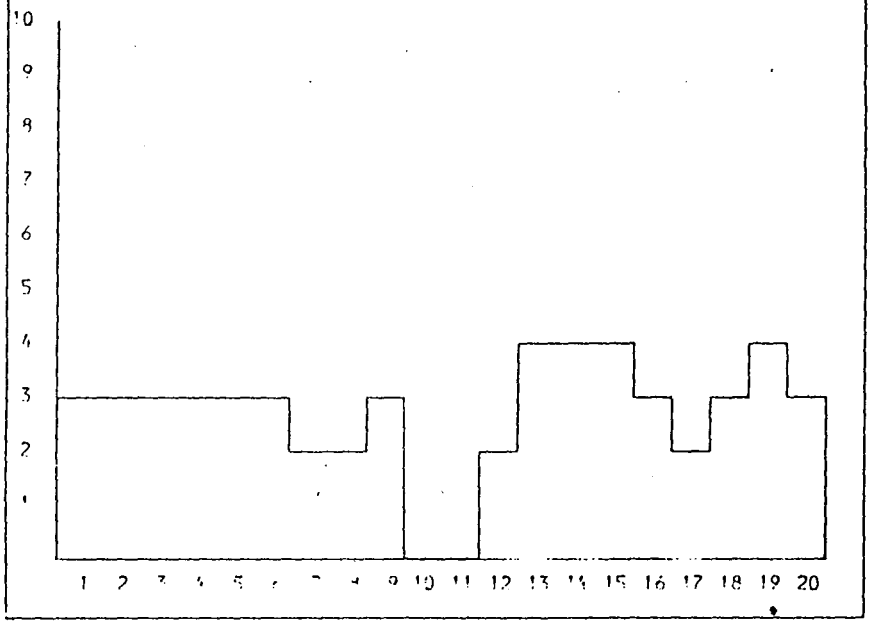


WITH SCHOOL

Figure23

RESPONSE PROFILE

NEWBROUGH

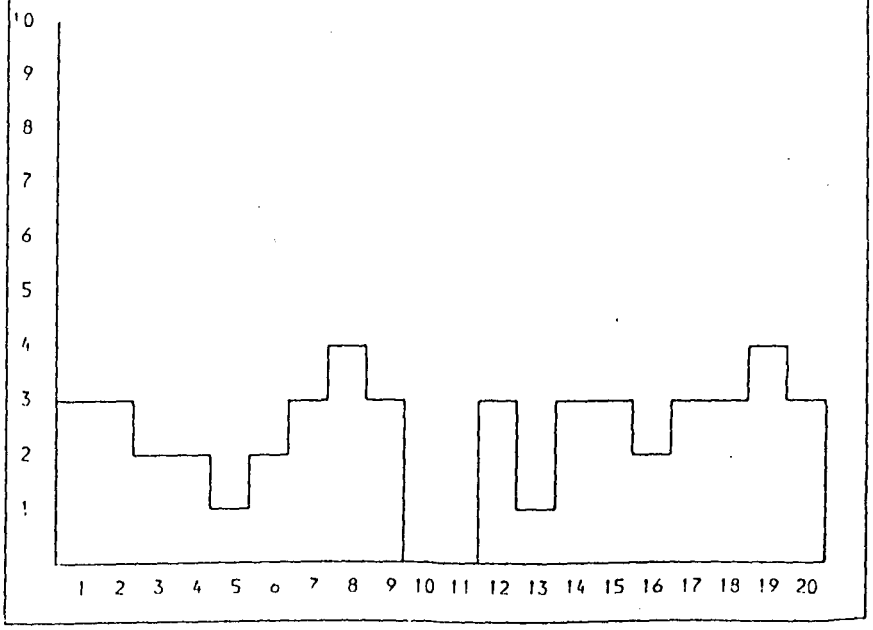


WITHOUT SCHOOL

Figure 24

RESPONSE PROFILE

WALL



Overall differences between the foregoing sets of plots are difficult to interpret. Some trends can, however, be detected.

Stamfordham and Harbottle, both retaining schools, appear to show higher overall values, suggesting a stronger influence of the school on the social life of the village. In fact the school at Stamfordham is unremarkable, offering little community stimulus. There is, however, a lively club and society circuit in existence, with the largely-commuter population capitalising on their close-knit, nuclear village. It is possible to speculate that there is a halo effect which embraces the school as 'ours', and leads to its enhanced appreciation. Harbottle School, being housed in an old building, and with a pleasant village hall as neighbour, is rarely used by the community. But the headmaster is an enthusiastic participant in village social life. The school could well be identified with his personal popularity.

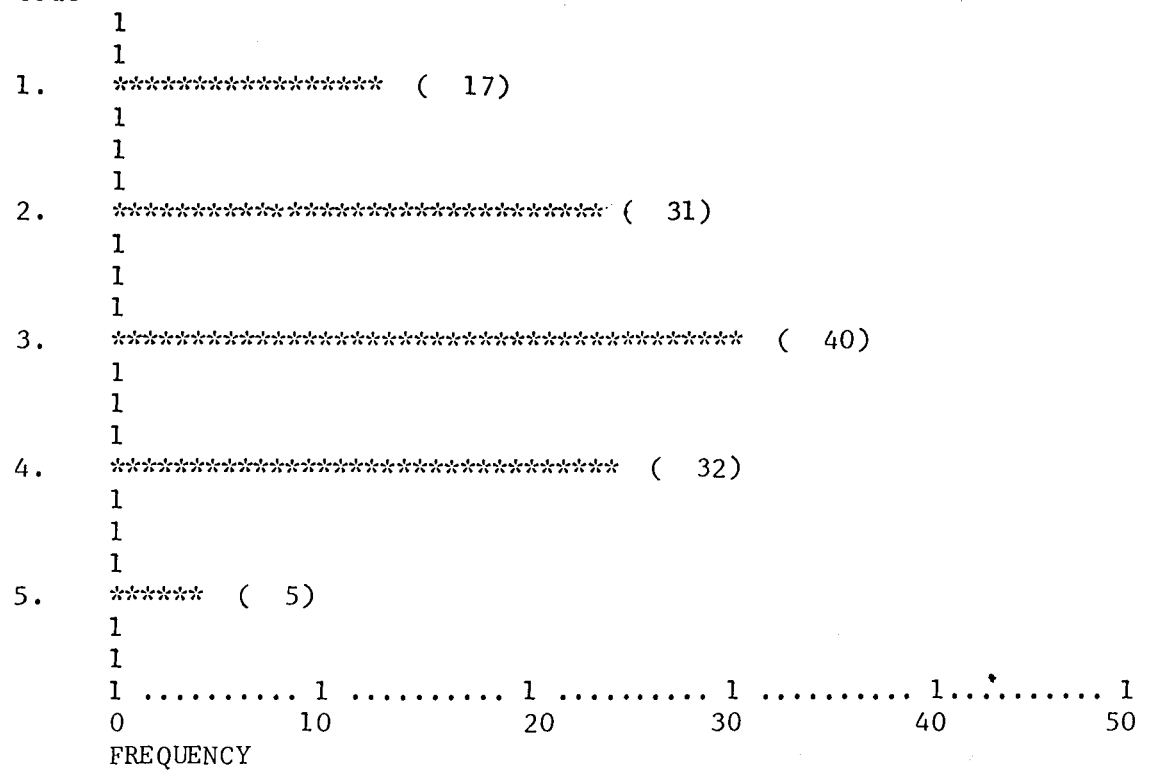
Carham and Longhirst, without schools, show low scores. The passing of their schools has not been regretted. Although neither community subscribes to a lively social scene, there is no evidence of resentment or discontent. 'We find our own pleasures', remarked one respondent enigmatically.

The next comparison involved the use of SPSS to calculate the frequencies of a series of answers to key questions contained in the Survey. A summary of results is contained in pages 166 to 168:

4.6.2. Overall Frequencies of Responses

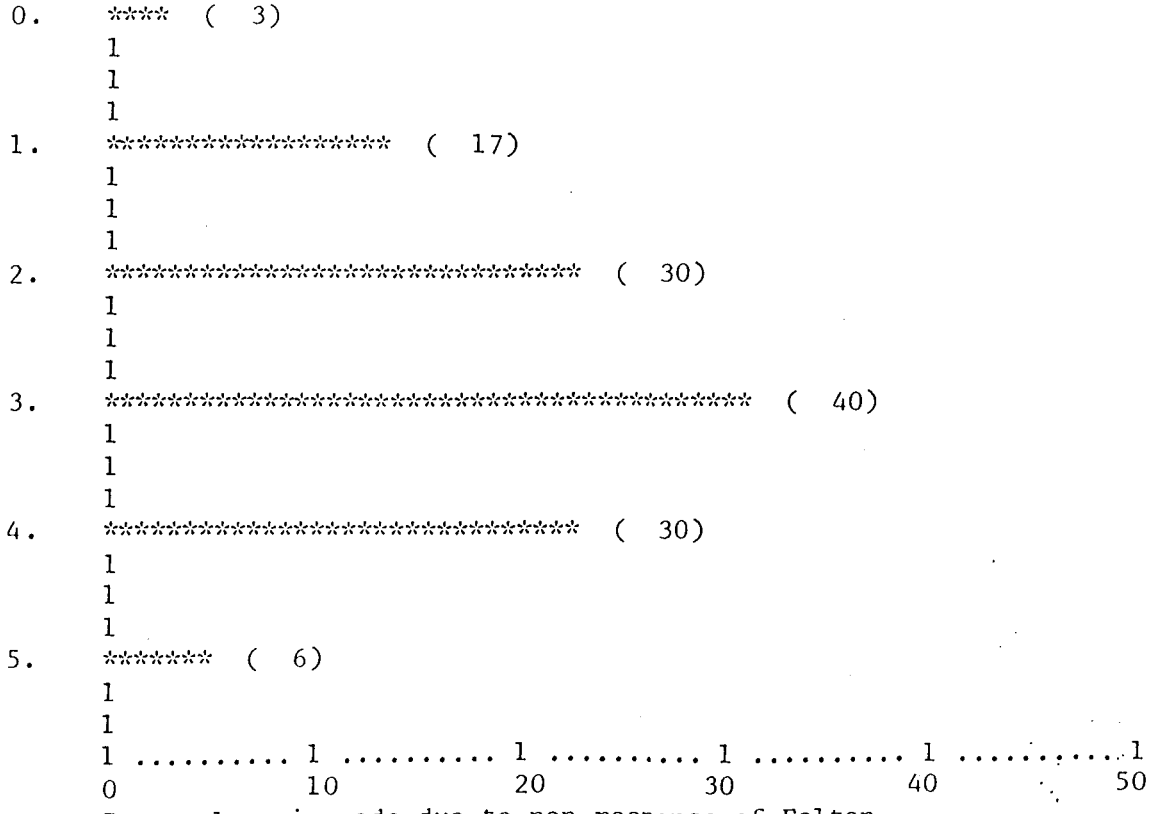
Of the 126 people responding, almost all liked living where they did, and most considered the village a friendly place with a fairly active social life, although the strength of feeling on the latter varied considerably.

Q3. Active Social Life



(note one case missing due to non response of Felton)

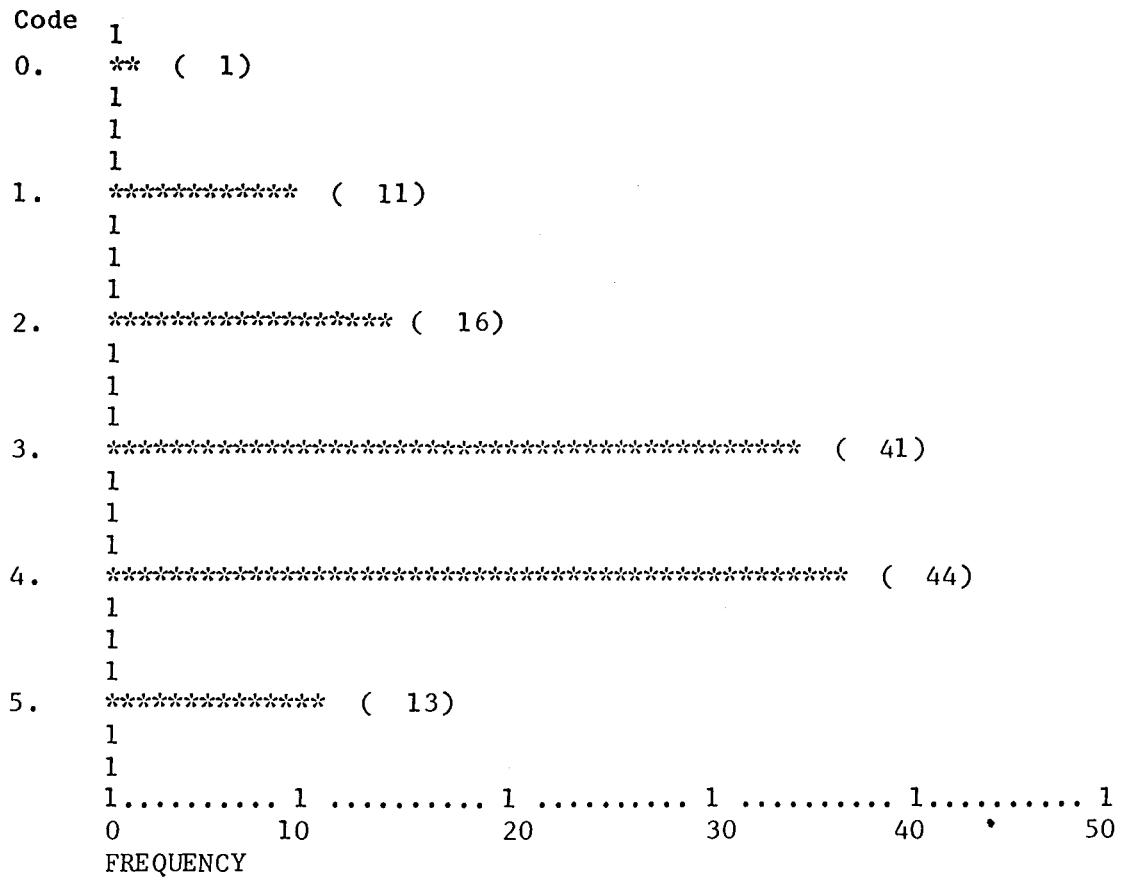
Again the perceived influence of the school on the social life now and in the past varied considerably.



Zero values in code due to non response of Felton

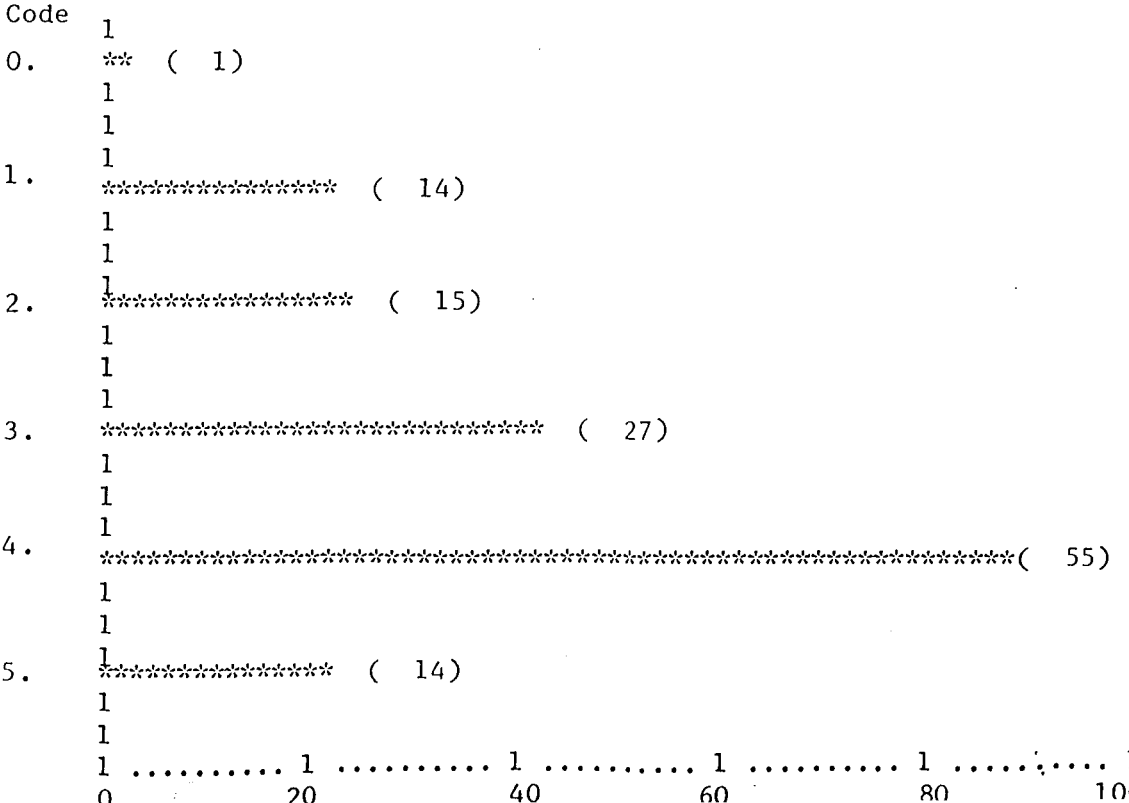
The influence of the school staff is not seen as being great on the overall social life of the village. Children are, however, seen to gain strongly from having a school in the village.

Q 14. Children Gain by School in Village

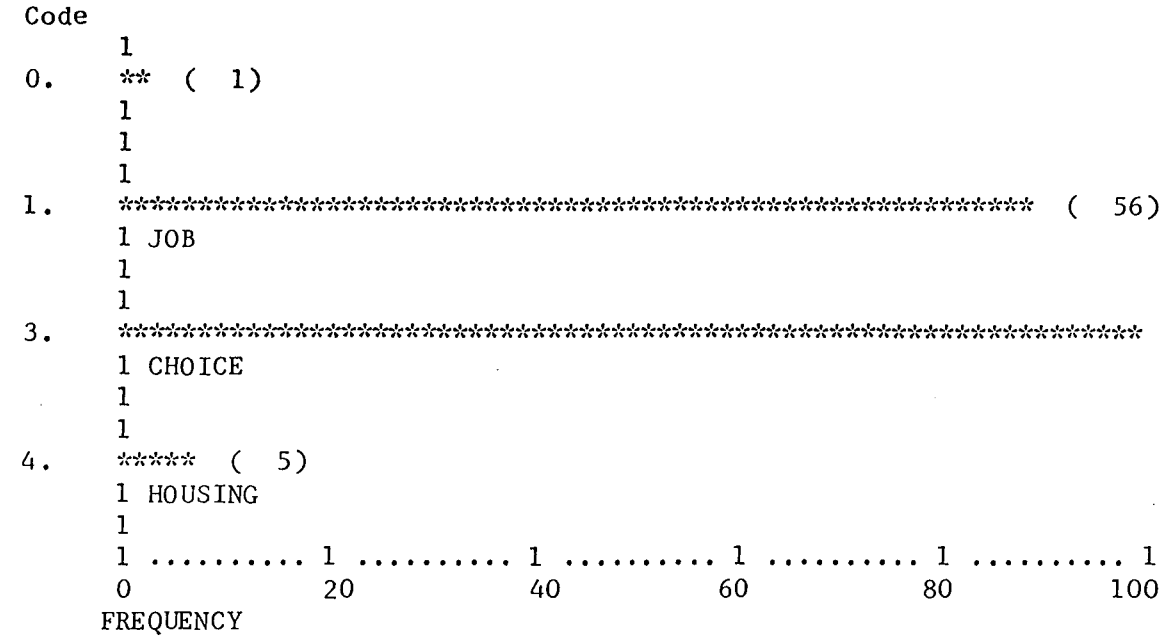


Similarly most people seem educationally satisfied with the school in the village if they have one. Most people consider the presence of a pre-school play group to be beneficial to the village, and consider that the parents of children under 9 gain if a school exists in the village.

Q 19. Parents of Under 9 Gain



REASON FOR RESIDENCE



Interestingly many people consider that they have chosen to live in the village from choice, rather than having to live there for employment or housing reasons.

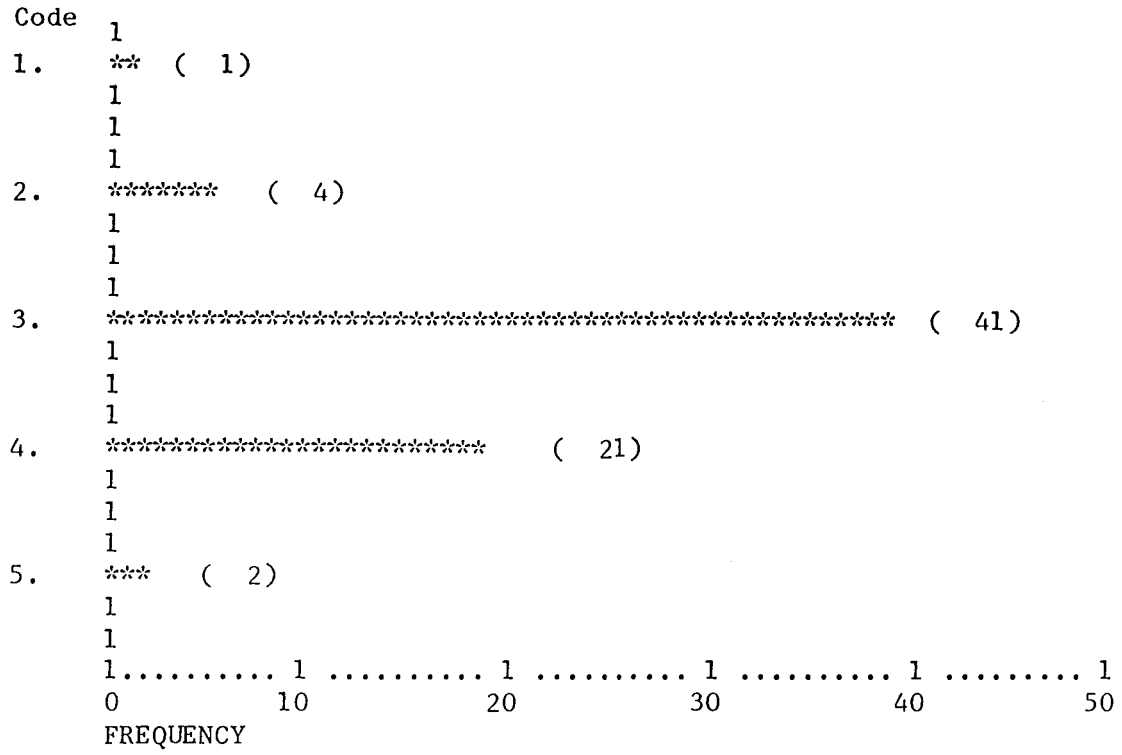
4.6.3. Comparison of Frequencies of Responses between Villages with Schools and those Without

In order to facilitate a comparison of the replies to the questions from those living in villages with schools, with those without, the data was split into 2 subfiles (SCHOOL and NO SCHOOL), and the frequencies of the strengths of feeling for a series of key questions compared, using SPSS, SUBFILES AND FREQUENCIES. The distribution of the strengths of feeling for the two categories is now examined for each of a series of variables.

For this analysis and the previous frequencies, full computer output for the analysis undertaken by computer is available. Any zero values under 'code' are due to the inclusion of Felton which gave no replies and was coded as 0's.

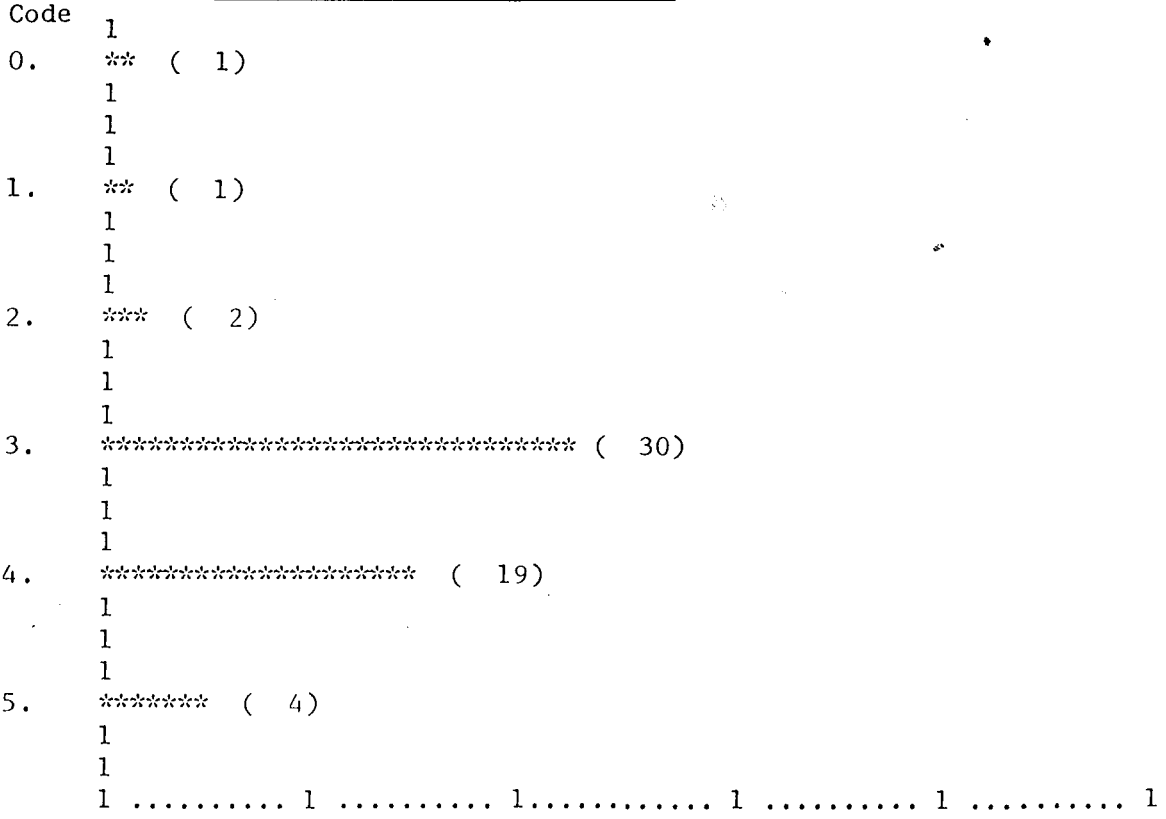
SUBFILE - NO SCHOOL

Q1. Do you Like Living Here?



SUBFILE - SCHOOL

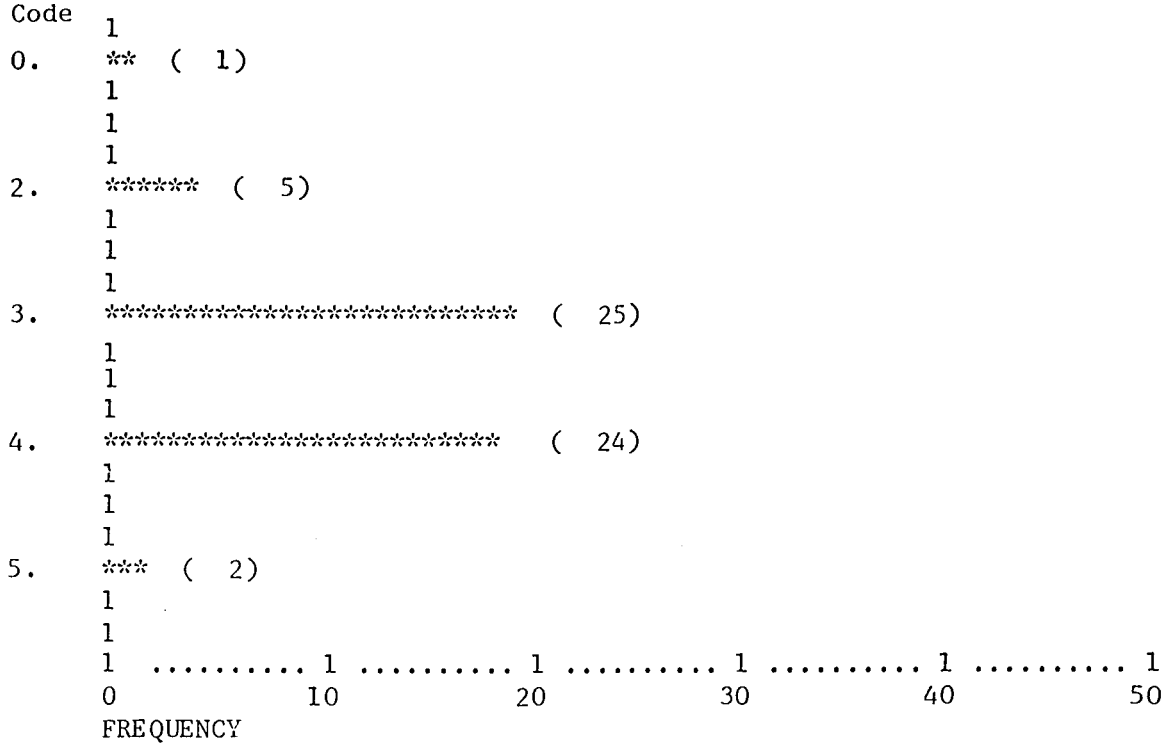
Q1. Do you Like Living Here?



There appears to be little significant difference between the two groups of respondents.

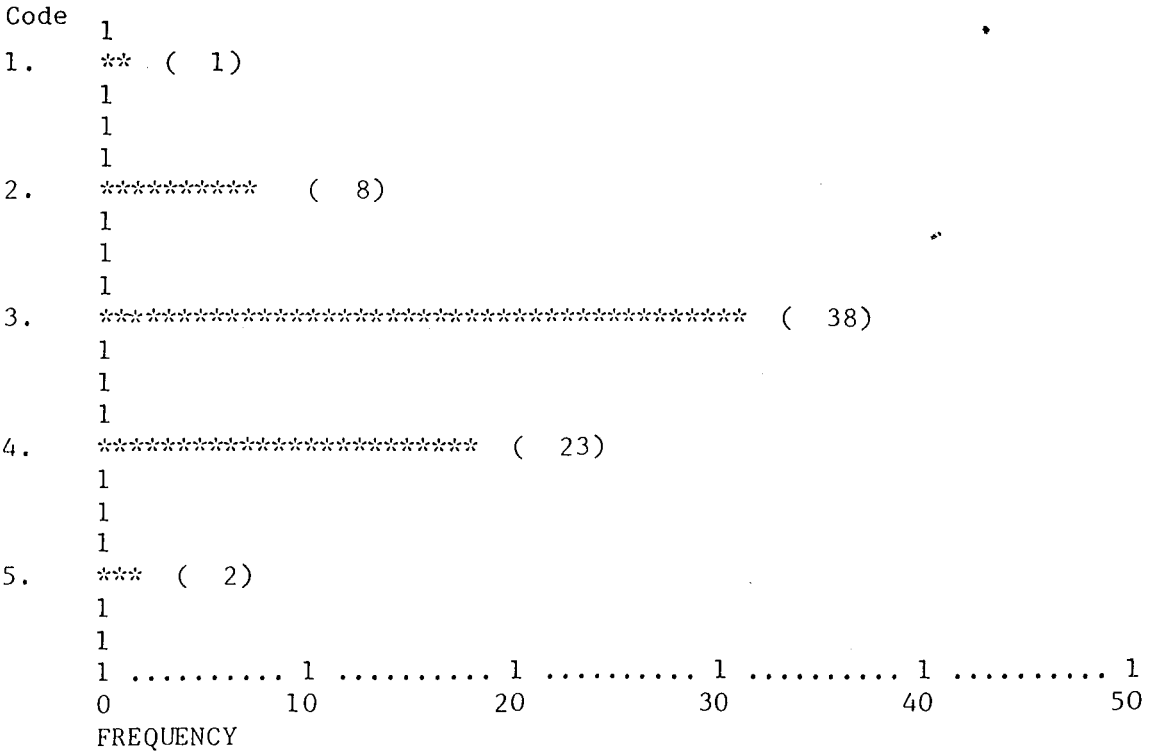
SUBFILE - SCHOOL

Q2. Village Friendly



SUBFILE - NO SCHOOL

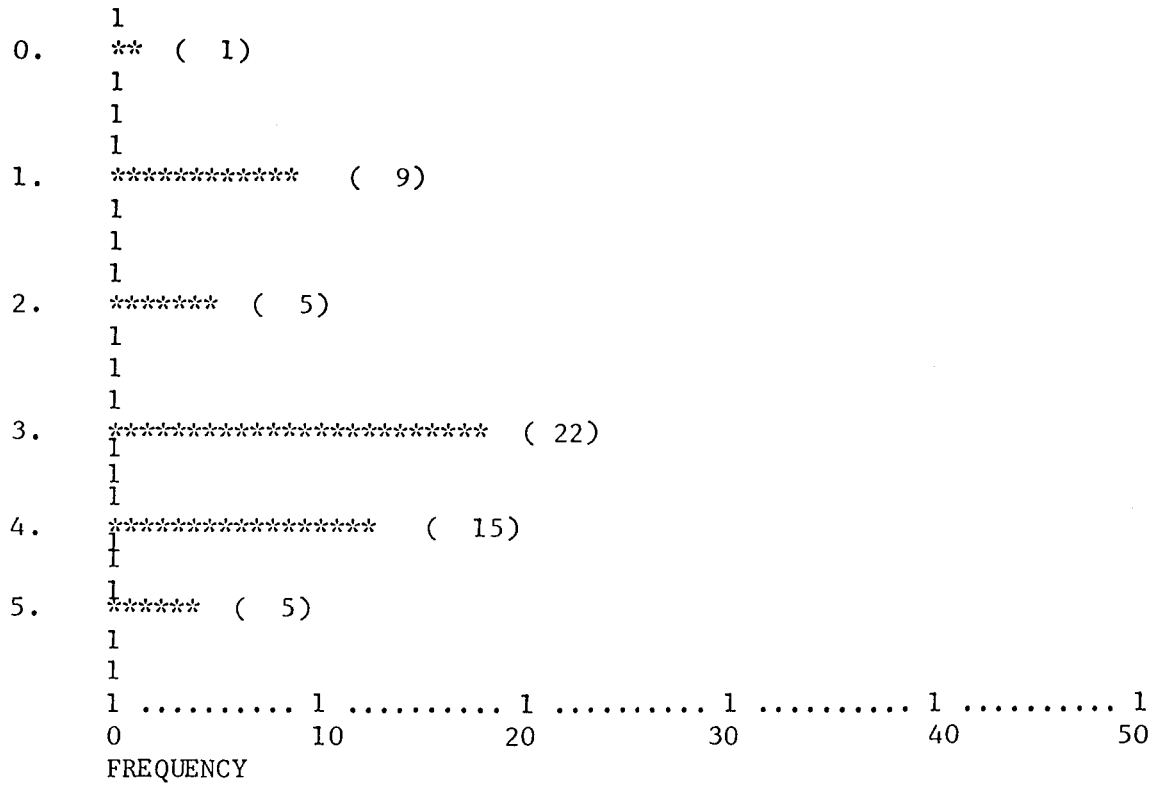
Q2. Village Friendly



Provisionally, it can be said that the school does not seem to make a village a friendlier place, based on the evidence of these responses.

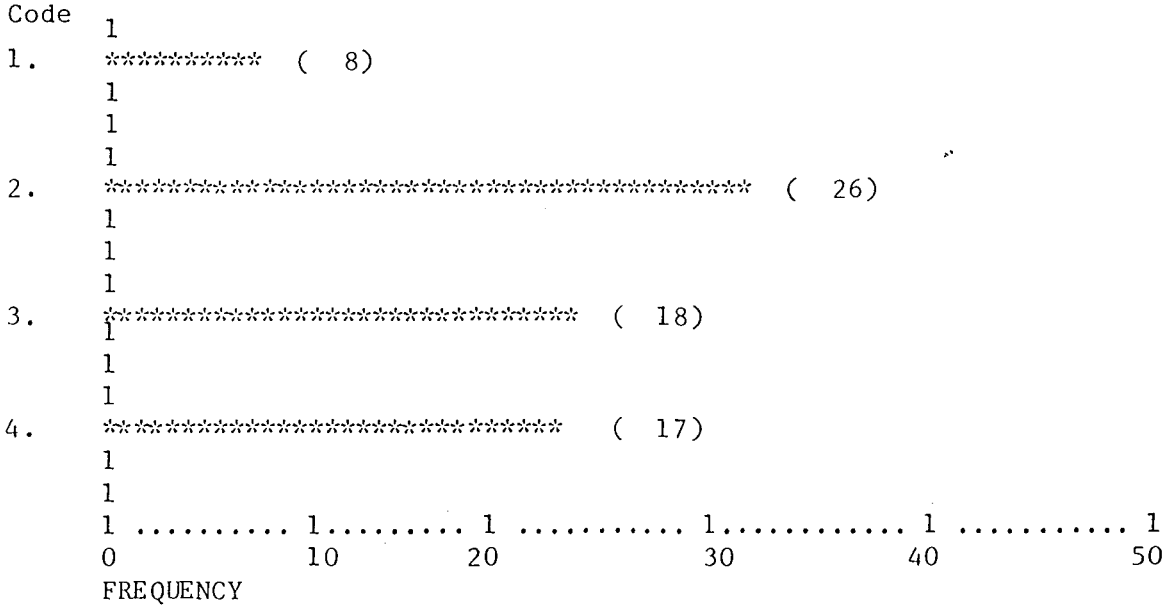
SUBFILE SCHOOL

Q3. Active Social Life



SUBFILE NO SCHOOL

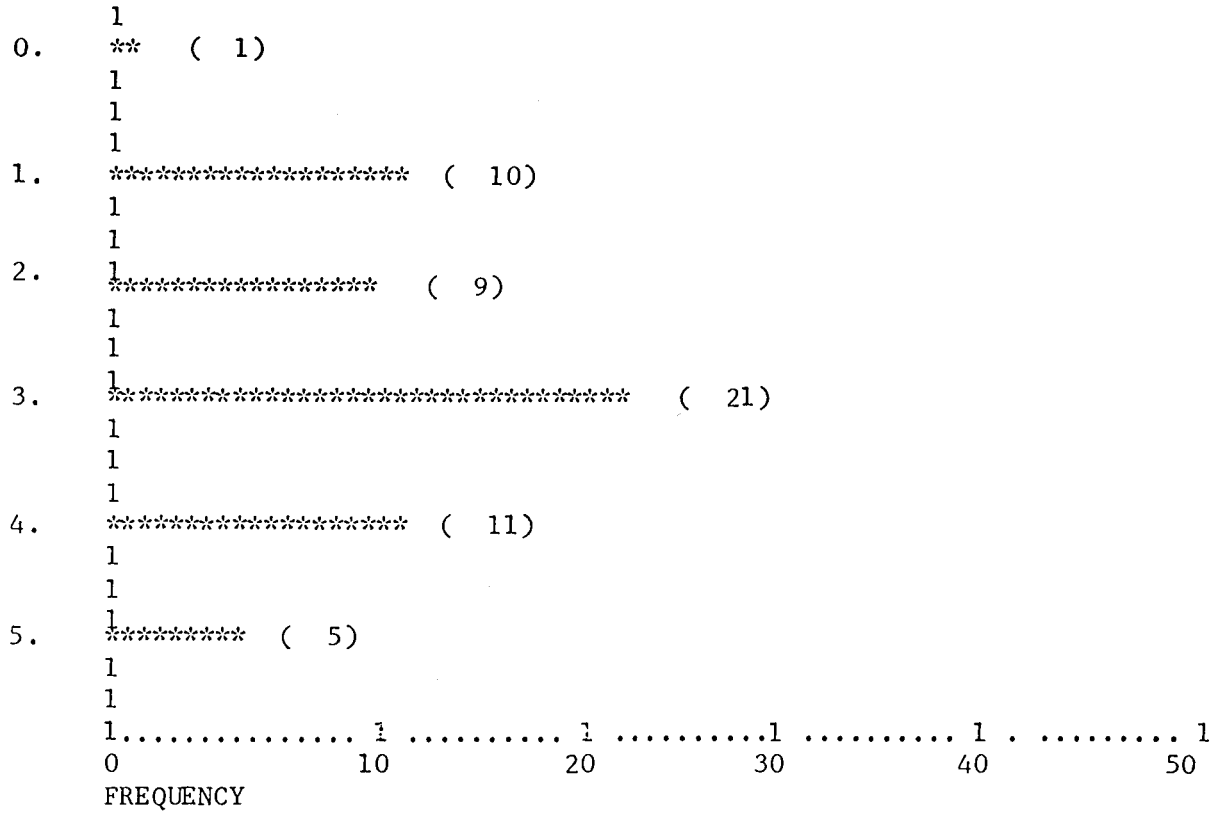
Q3. Active Social Life



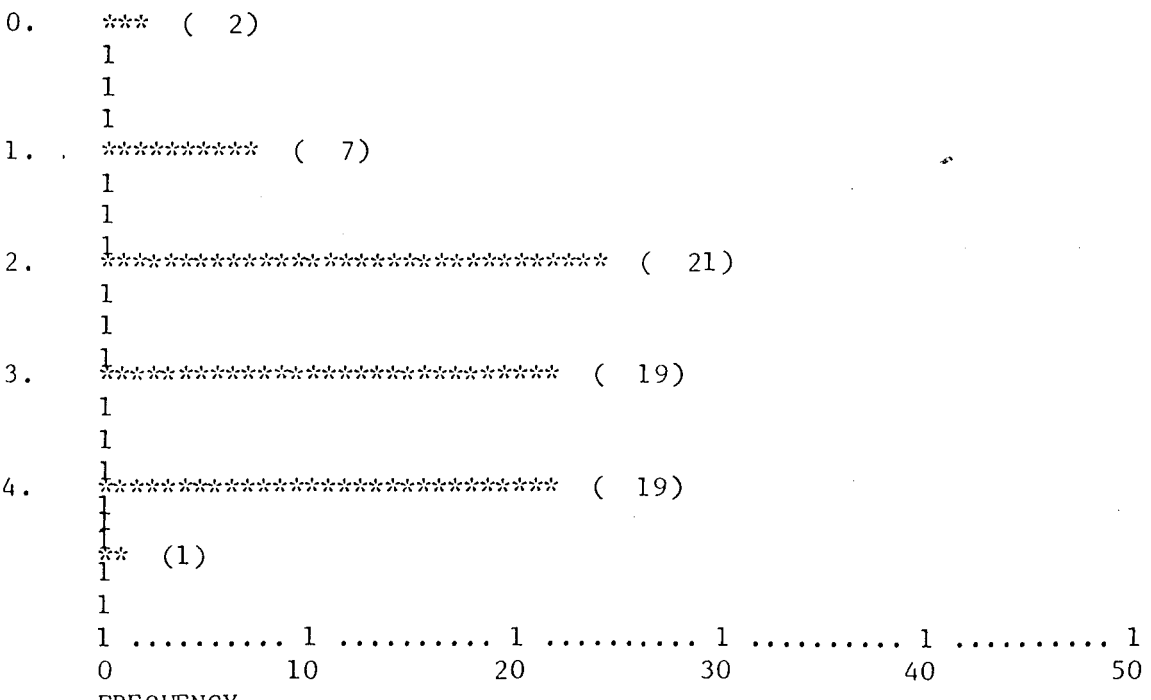
Similarly, the presence of a school does not seem to have a significant effect on the level of activity of the villages' social life.

SUBFILE SCHOOL

Q4. School's Influence on Social Life



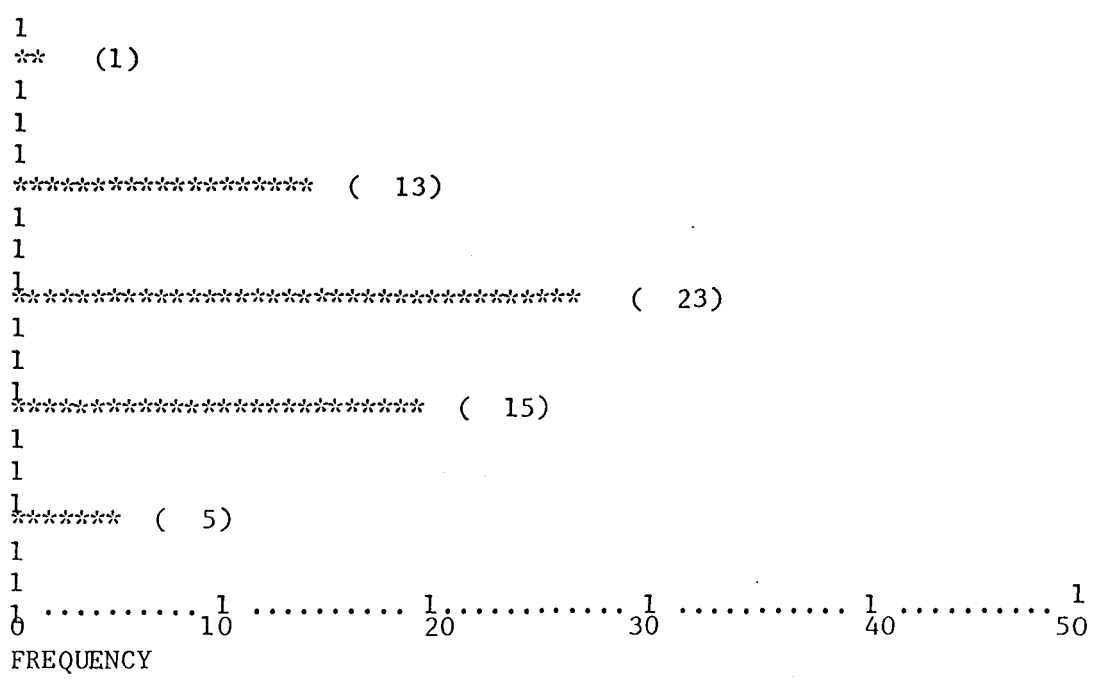
Q4. Schools Influence on Social Life



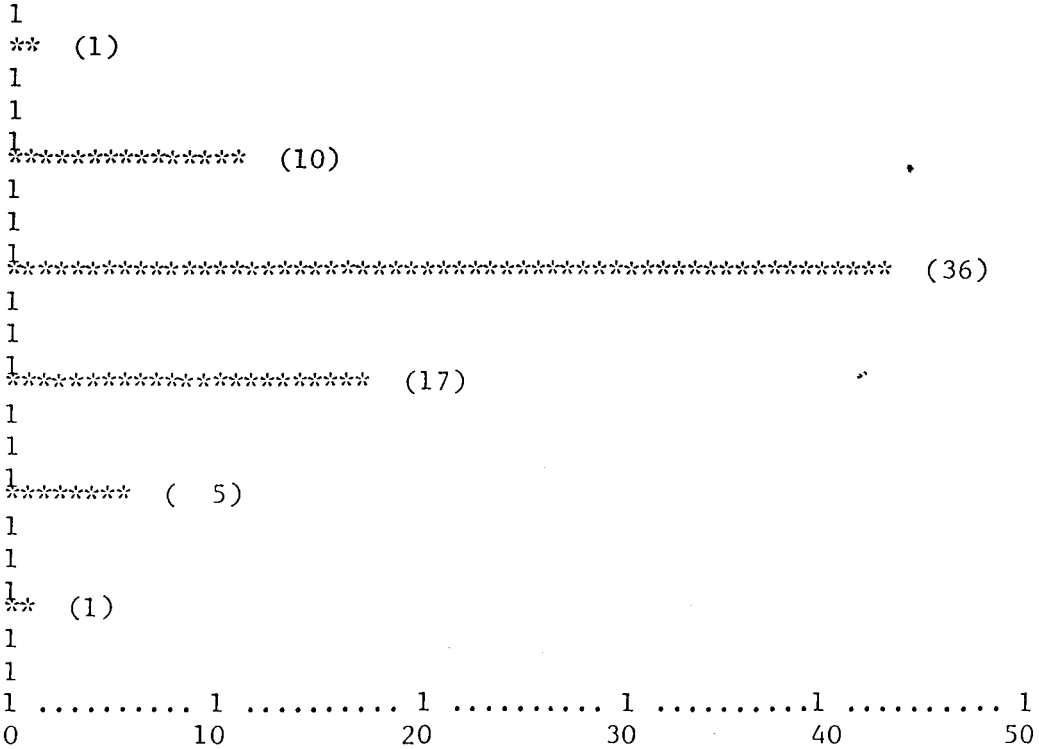
The people living in those villages without schools considered that the school's influence on social life would be higher if they had one. The villages with schools placed less emphasis on their influence.

SUBFILE SCHOOL

Q6. INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL STAFF



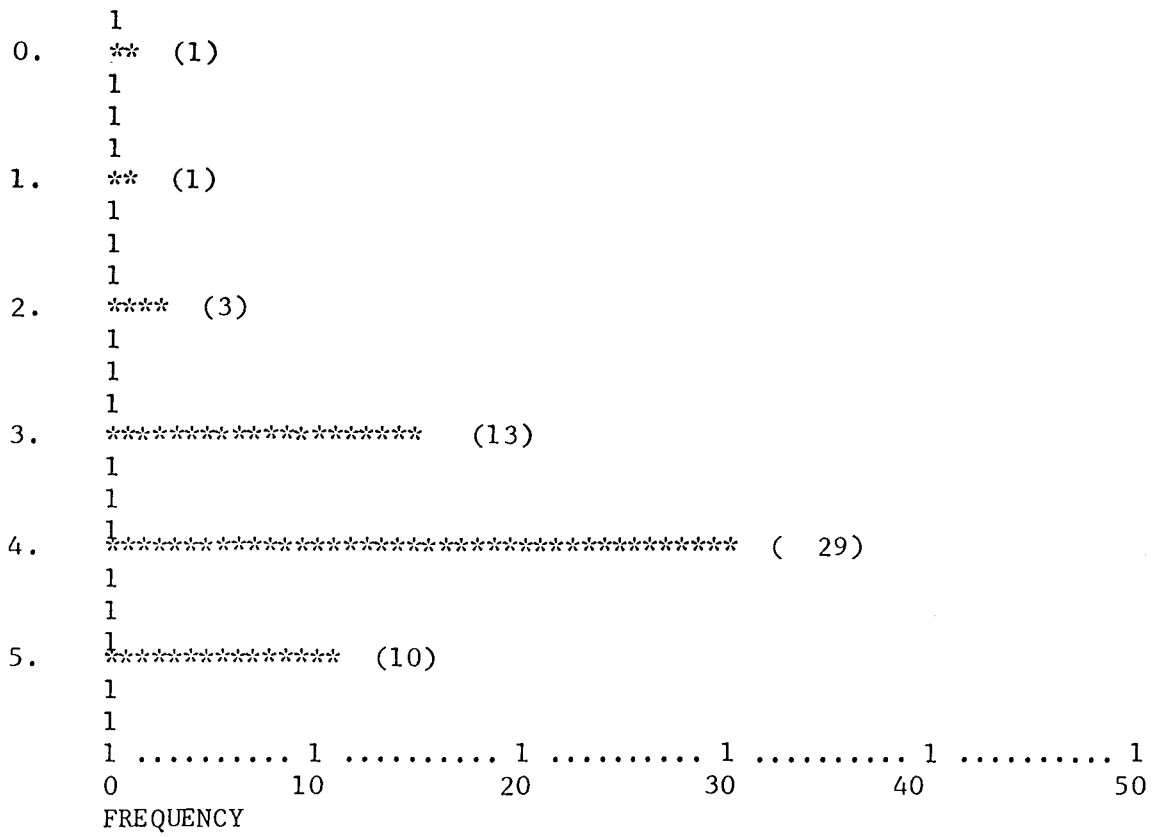
Q6. INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL STAFF



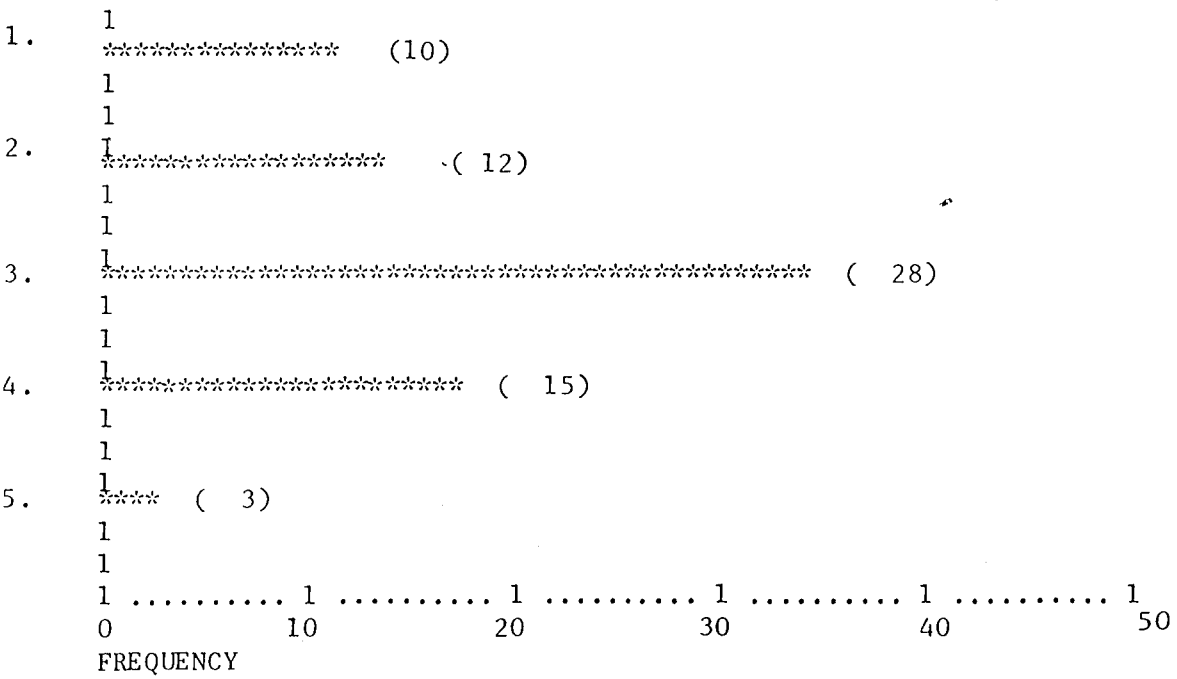
There appears to be little difference in the influence of school personnel on the social life of the village. This may be due to the fact that teachers are increasingly not living in the village where they teach.

SUBFILE SCHOOL

Q 14. Children Gain by School in Village



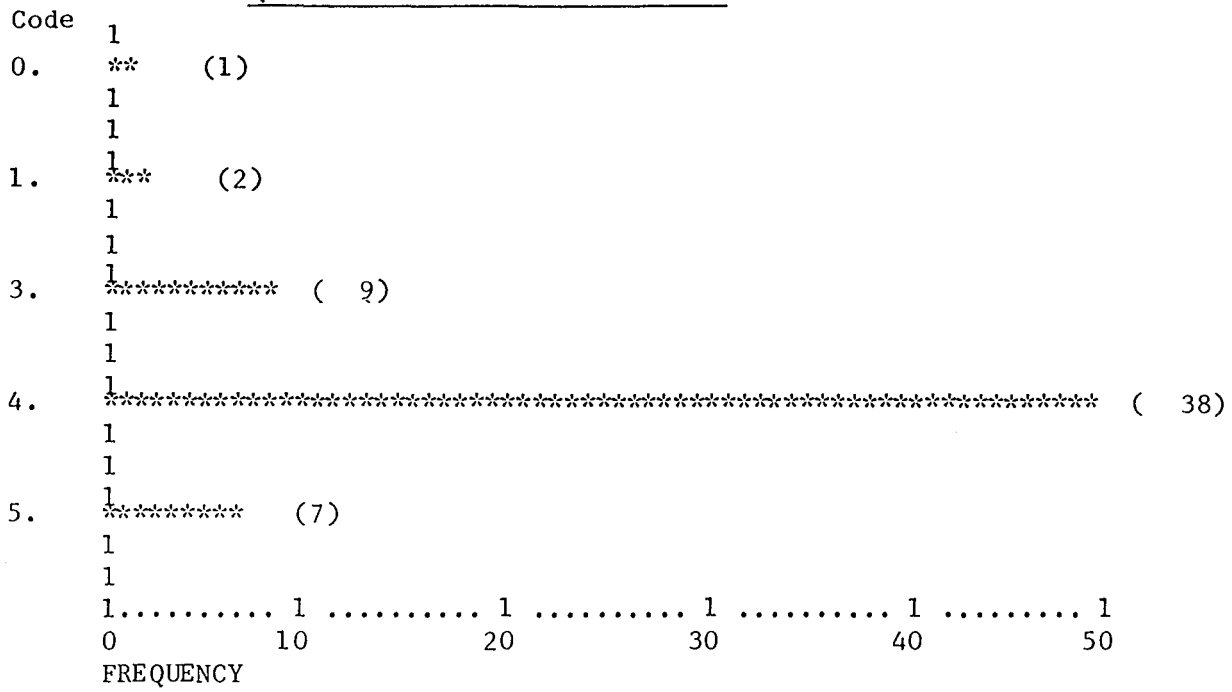
Q 14. Children Gain by School in Village



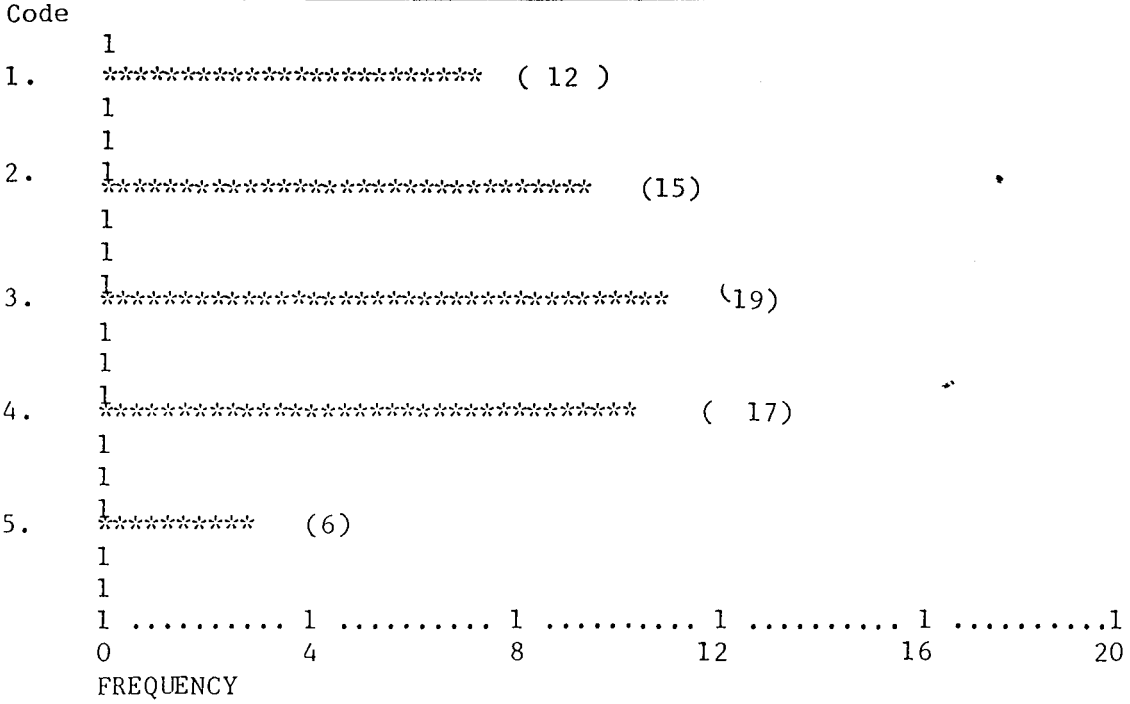
People in both sets of villages appear to consider that the children would be better off if the school was in the village. This is confirmed by the figures for question 19 (Parents of Under-9 year -old children gain by having a school in the village).

SUBFILE SCHOOL

Q 19. Parents of Under 9 Gain



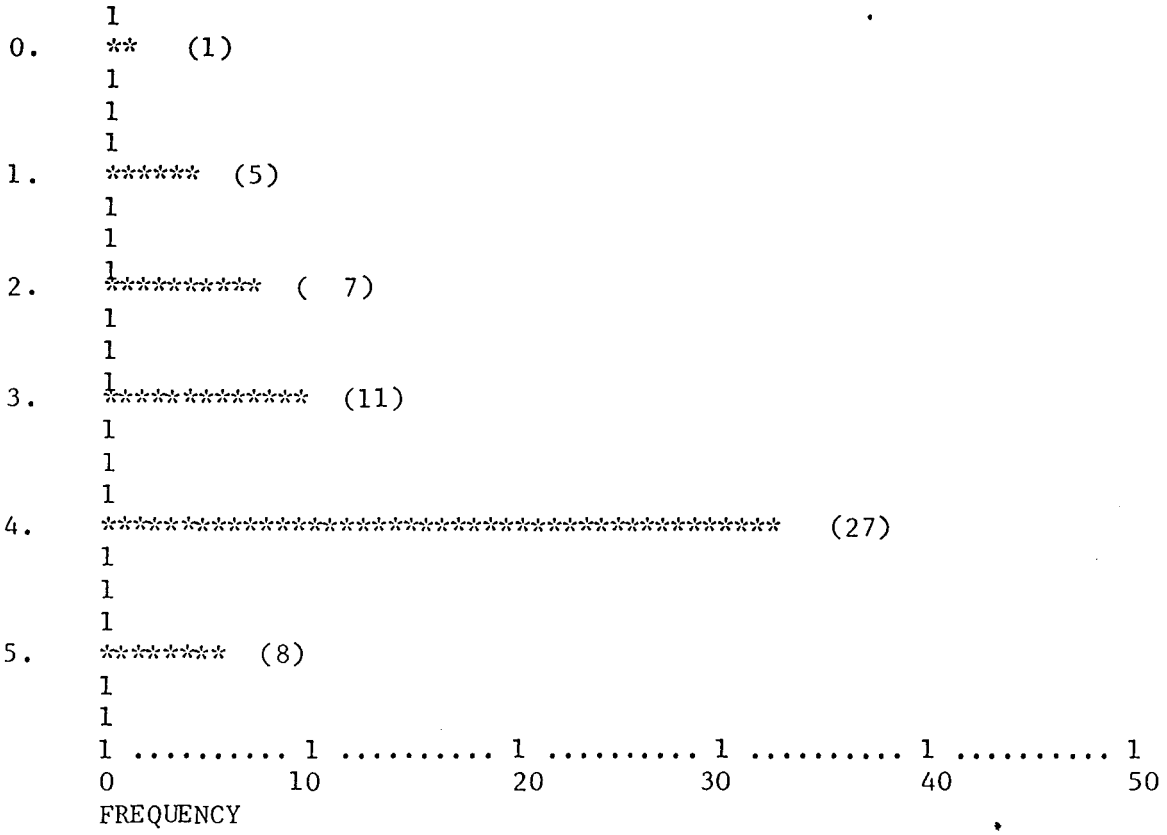
Q 19. Parents of Under 9 Gain



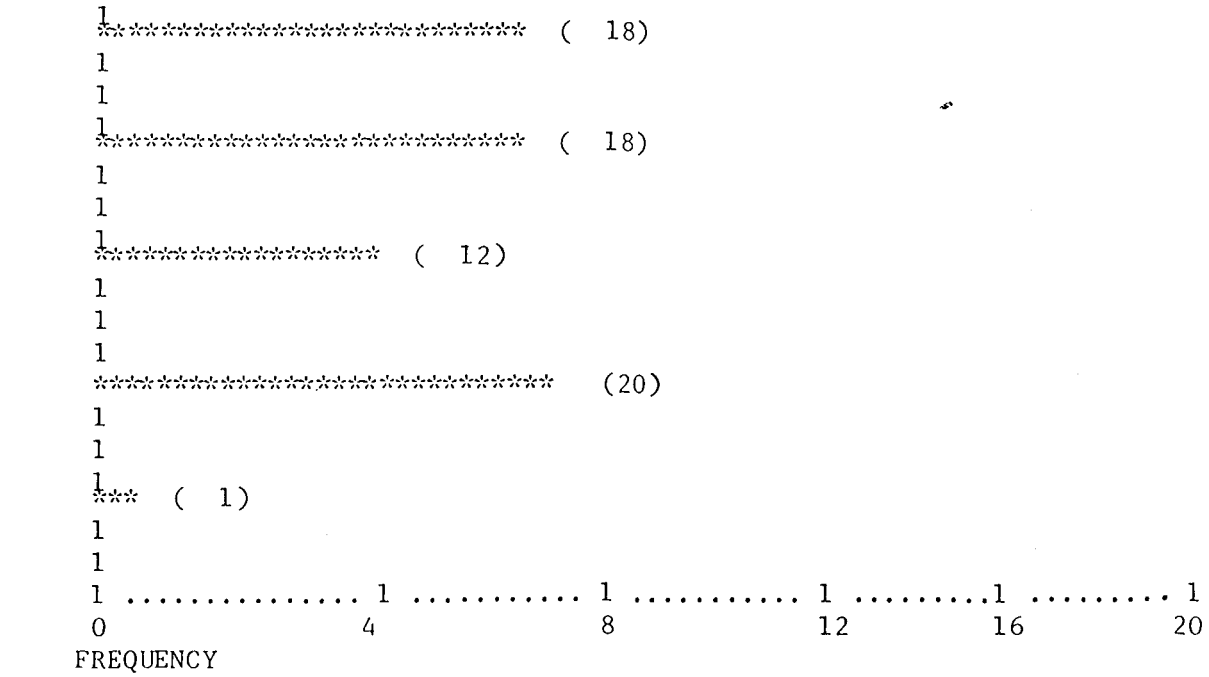
However, in the villages where a school does exist, parents are more strongly convinced that they gain by its presence, than in villages without a school. This may be because parents of young children in villages without schools have learned to live without a school over a period of time.

SUBFILE SCHOOL

Q 20. Elderly Gain / Lose by School



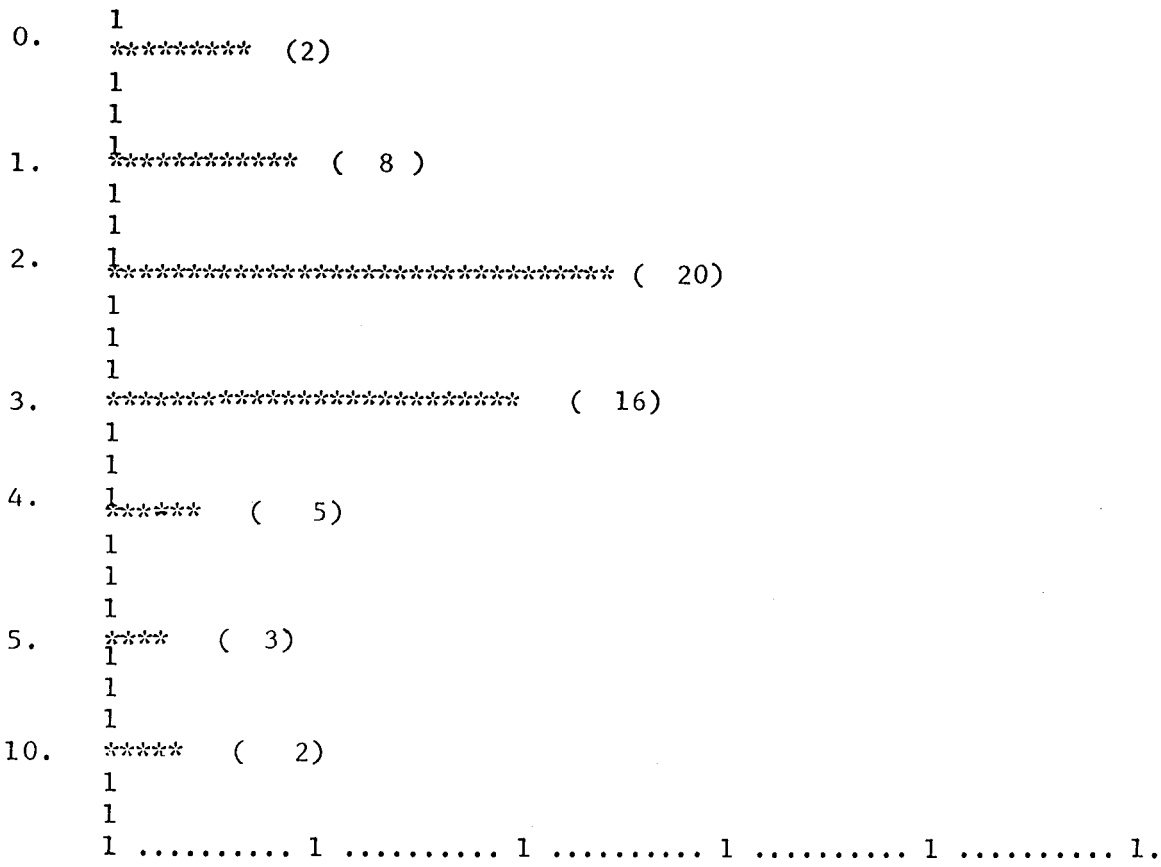
Q 20. Elderly Gain Lose by School



This question took two forms. In villages with schools, it asked, do elderly people gain by having a school in the village? The answer appears to be a strong affirmative. Conversely in villages without schools, the question was, do elderly people lose by not having a school in the village? To this question the answer seemed mixed, although a significant number do not seem to think that old people are disadvantaged in this respect.

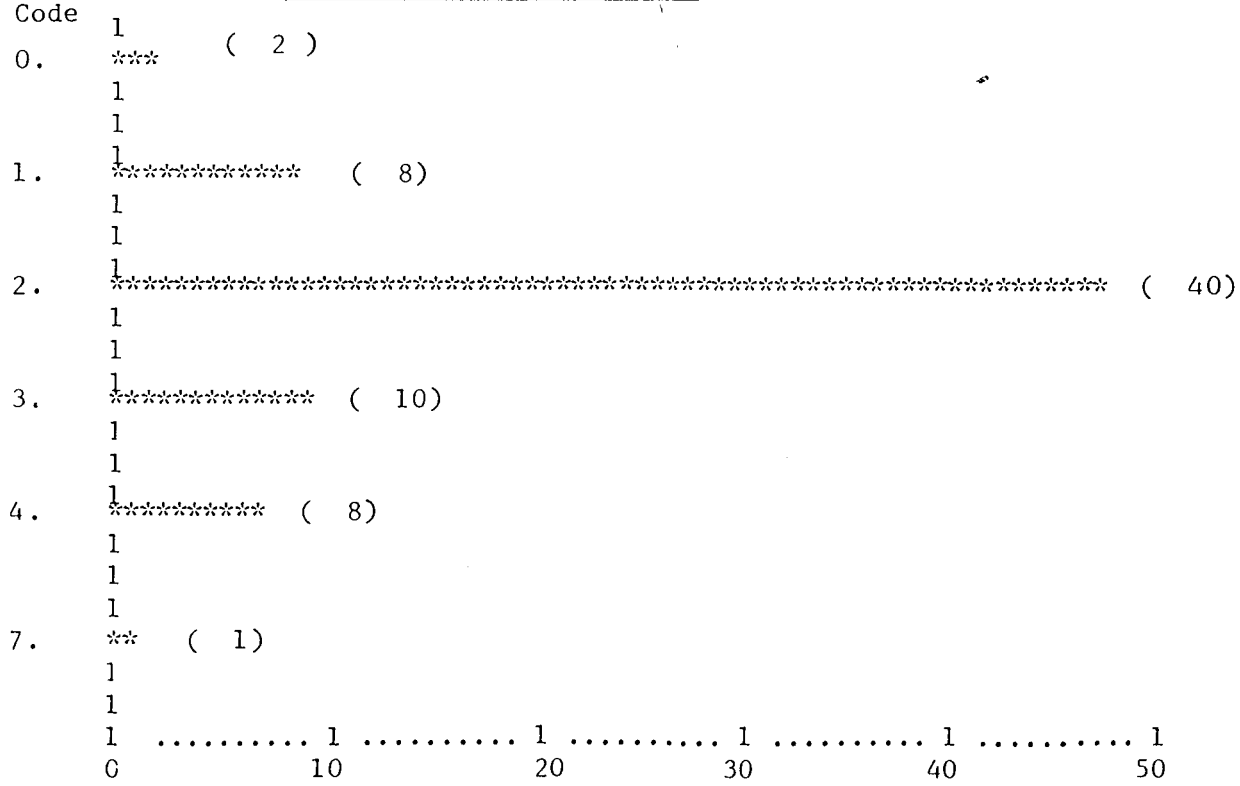
SUBFILE SCHOOL

CHILD - NUMBER OF CHILDREN



SUBFILE - NO SCHOOL

CHILD - NUMBER OF CHILDREN

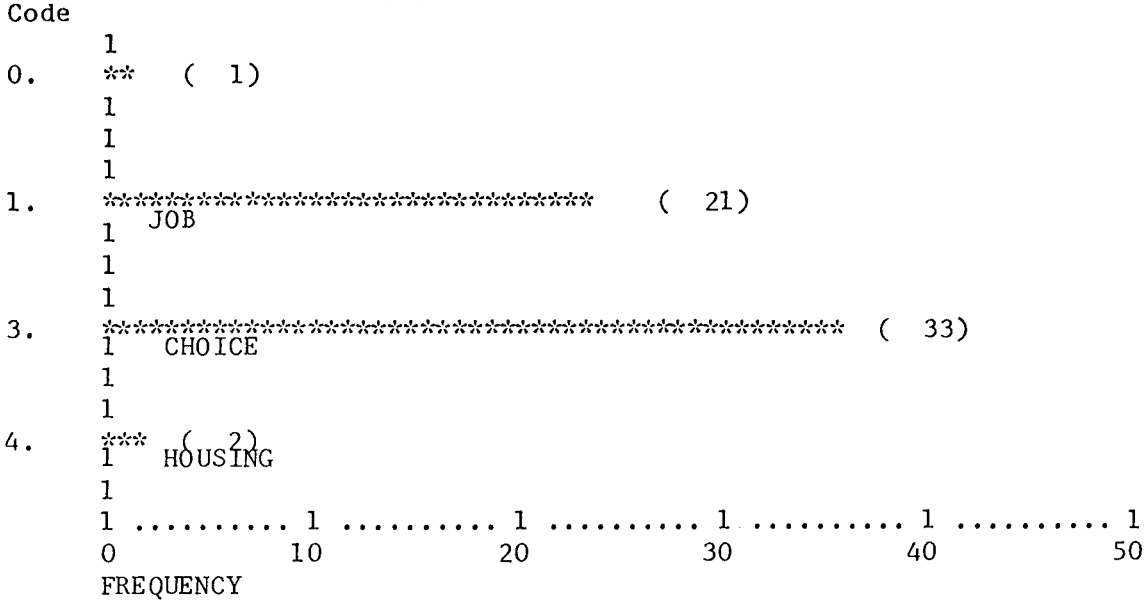


Although it may be due to a small sample size, and bias in the data, it does seem that there are fewer large families in villages without schools. However, this trend is weak.

The mean number of years residence is:
20.6 years for villages without a school and
26.7 years for villages with a school

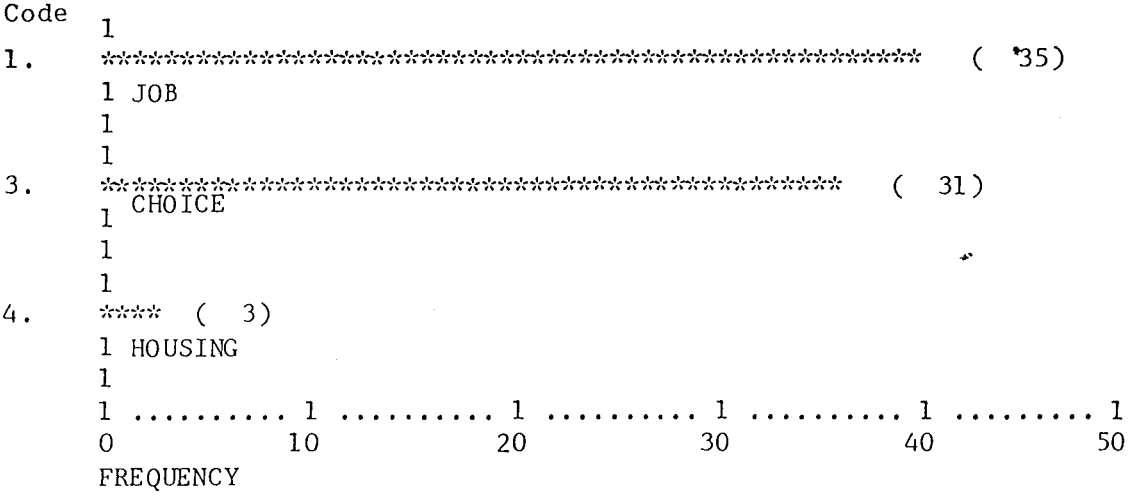
SUBFILE SCHOOL

REASON: REASON FOR RESIDENCE



SUBFILE NO SCHOOL

REASON: REASON FOR RESIDENCE



The split between the reasons for residence is perhaps better seen in percentage terms (relative frequency):

	School	No school
JOB	36.8	50.7
CHOICE	57.9	44.9
HOUSING	3.5	4.3

The influences of the tied cottage, or the Forestry Commission housing at Byrness and Stonehaugh, were not marked.

From this one can provisionally conclude that where there is no school, residence is probably more job orientated, whereas in villages with schools, people are more likely to reside from choice. The trend is, however, not strong.

4.6.4. Summary of Results

The hypothesis is that there is no social difference between those Northumbrian villages which have retained their schools and those which have lost them.

An analysis of the answers to the questionnaire indicate the following:

1. The average values which the villages place on schools show no overall trend.
2. The population changes in the villages do not seem to have been influenced by the loss of a school.
3. The level of other services in a village with a school is higher than those without. But it is difficult to assess whether the loss of the school can be held responsible for the loss of other services.
4. A comparison of the levels of strength of feeling on a set of 20 questions show few overall trends, but:
   (a) most people in all villages consider the presence of a school in a village benefits younger children and their parents.
   (b) no school in a village does not mean that the community is any less friendly or active socially.
   (c) the teaching staff appear to have little influence on the level of social activity in a village.
   (d) the elderly in villages with schools consider them an asset to the village and themselves.

5. An examination of reasons for residence appears to show that people in villages with schools are more likely to have chosen to live there.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In some ways this study would have proved more satisfying if it had produced clear-cut results:

1. If it had been possible to locate the village school, in either Northumberland or Cumbria, as a key constituent in the social life of the village.
2. If teachers could be recognised as catalysts in the communities they serve.
3. If the decrease in rural services was matched by depopulation and a decline in village morale.
4. If the closure of village schools could be seen as a mid-20th century phenomenon without historical precedent.

This not being the case, it is difficult unequivocally to verify the hypothesis. It is possible, however, to conclude with some general statements:

1. The closure of a village school has little effect on the social life of a village. It does not die, although it may change.
2. The absence of a school does not inhibit people - young or old - from coming to live in a village.
3. When a school closes, other services and amenities do not necessarily wither.

But to add the reservations that:

4. There is evidence that elderly people miss the sound and presence of children in a village without a school.
5. There is also an indication that young mothers miss the daily social intercourse associated with taking their children to and from school.
6. It is possible to recognise a psychological reaction by individuals

in villages whose school is to be closed. It is regarded as an affront, and an example of the disregard of 'the authorities' for rural life. Indeed the school has a symbolic role.

5.1 By-products of the Investigation

a. LEA's would do well to reconsider their educational arguments for closing schools. They are, on the whole, based on flimsy evidence and limited research. In particular, the argument that larger first schools provide a broader curriculum and a variety of approaches is suspect.

The most cogent case for closing a small school is that it is expensive to run as compared to a larger unit.

b. People like living in their villages. Most of them do so by choice. The term 'rural deprivation' needs to be defined more rigorously. There are disadvantages to living in the country, just as there are disadvantages to living in cities, and in the suburbs., But the rural lobby needs to make a more reasoned case.

c. It has to be recognised that village communities are dynamic institutions. They are not now generally based on the nuclear family or even the extended family. Much more do they depend on working and professional relationships, or on friendships forged in sport of through common interests. So social links are now often ex-village. Village people frequently claim to lead an active social life without participating in any activity in their own village. They live there. They are happy there. But they expect little of their village, and they put little into it.

5.2 Recommendations

It is suggested that the government, local authorities and voluntary bodies have two options:

Either (1) To accept the concept of the changing village community, subject to market forces and economic criteria. In this situation more village schools will close because they are too expensive

to run.

Or (2) Go instead, as in Scandinavia, for a policy of intervention, based on the premise that unless something is done many villages will become places predominantly for the elderly and the town-orientated commuter.

Such intervention might include:

a. Keeping open all two-teacher schools where governors and parents agree.

b. LEA's giving a positive lead in encouraging community use of school premises. New appointments of teachers and ancillary staff should be biased towards a community commitment.

c. Housing authorities making positive discrimination in favour of family housing development in villages whose schools are at risk.

APPENDIX 1 Questionnaire Completed by Key Personnel

THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE CLOSURE OF VILLAGE SCHOOLS IN NORTHUMBERLAND

VILLAGE QUESTIONNAIRE NAME OF VILLAGE: .....

Do you have any mobile shops which come to your village? _____
If so, can you say which ones and give an approximate date when they started to come?

Name/Type of shop	Date when first came
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____

Do you have a Scout group in your village? _____
If so, can the Scout Master give the following information and give the date of closure if the group has ceased to function?

Scout Group formed _____

Membership 1951 _____

Membership 1961 _____

Membership 1971 _____

Membership at present _____

Scout Group closed _____

Do you have a Guide Group in your village? _____
If so, can the Guider give the following information and give the date of closure if the group has ceased to function?

Guide Group formed _____

Membership 1951 _____

Membership 1961 _____

Membership 1971 _____

Membership at present _____

Guide Group closed _____

Do you have a Cub Group in your village? _____
If so, can the Cub leader give the following information and give the date of closure if the group has ceased to function?

Cub Group formed _____

Membership 1951 _____

Membership 1961 _____

Membership 1971 _____

Cub Group closed _____

Do you have a Brownies Group in your village? _____
If so, can the Brownies leader give the following information and give the date of closure if the group has ceased to function?

Brownie Group formed _____

Membership 1951 _____

Membership 1961 _____

Membership 1971 _____

Membership at present _____

Brownie Group closed _____

Do you have a Youth Club in your village? _____
If you do, can the leader give the following information and give the date of closure if the club has ceased to function?

Youth Club formed _____

Membership 1951 _____

Membership 1961 _____

Membership 1971 _____

Membership at present _____

Do you have any of the following permanent shops in your village?
If you used to have any of them, when did they finally close?

	Tick if you have one now	Date of final closure
Butchers		
Bakers		
Greengrocers		
Hardware		
Drapers		
Grocers		
Newsagents		
General Stores		
Post Office		
Chemist		
Bank		

If you have no shops, where is your nearest shop? _____

Which is your nearest shopping centre to the village? _____

_____

Where is the nearest bank, if none in the village? _____

Where is your nearest Post Office if none in the village? _____

_____

Where is your nearest chemist, if none in the village? _____

Do you have a permanent library in your village? _____

If you used to have one, when did it cease to function? _____

Do you have a mobile library which visits your village? _____

If so, when did it first call? _____

Where is your nearest library with a reference section? _____

_____

What are the names of the pubs in your village?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

If there were any other pubs which closed within the last thirty years, what were their names and when did they close?

Name of pub.	Date of closure
1. _____	
2. _____	
3. _____	
4. _____	

Is there a doctor's surgery in your village? _____

If there was a surgery there in the last thirty years, when did it close?

_____

If there is no surgery in your village, where is your nearest doctor?

_____

Where is your nearest dentist? _____

Where does your health visitor come from? _____

Do you have a recreation ground in your village where there are facilities for young children? _____

Do you have an area which can be used for a playing field for older children?

_____

When was the recreation ground opened? _____

When was the playing field opened? _____

If either has ceased to function, can you say when? _____

Do you have a village hall? _____

If you do, can the chairman of the village hall committee tell us on how many nights it was used in the following years?

1951 _____

1961 _____

1971 _____

1979 _____

Is your village hall a former school? _____

What clubs, societies or self-help groups do you have in your village? When were they started? What is their membership? E.g. W.I., playgroup.

Name of group	Year started	Membership 1951	1961	1971	1979	Year close
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						

What places of worhsip are there in the village now?

_____

_____

5.

Have the number of services diminished over the years? _____

Do you have a resident vicar or rector? _____

If not, when did you last have one? _____

Were there any other places of worhsip which were open during the last thirty years which have now ceased to function? Can you name them and say when they closed?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How many councillors do you have on your Parish Council? _____

How many did you have in the following years?

1951 _____ 1961 _____ 1971 _____

How frequent are your Parish Council meetings: _____

_____

How frequent were their meetings in the following years?

1951 _____ 1961 _____ 1971 _____

Do you have any special village events such as a village show, a sports day or a pantomime?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Are there any events of this kind which used to take place during the last thirty years which have now ceased to function? Can you say what they were and when they last took place?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Where is your nearest police station or police house? _____

_____

What does your bus service consist of now?

Can you say what changes have taken place in public transport facilities to and from your village and give an approximate date when they occurred?

Are there any other services or facilities which you have in your village which are of importance and which we have overlooked?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Are there any other services or facilities which you used to have in your village which were of importance and which we have overlooked? Can you say when they ceased to exist?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Please return to David Bell, Northumberland College of Higher Education, Ponteland, Newcastle upon Tyne. NE20 OAB

November 1980

(a) Your age? FACT

(b) Children? Their ages? FACT

(c) How long have you lived here? FACT

(d) Must you live here, or is it by choice? FACT

(e) Do you like living here? FACT

1. Why or why do you not like living here? OPINION (Elaboration & enthusiasm 1-5 scale)

2. Is the village a friendly place? OPINION (Elaboration & enthusiasm 1-5 scale)

3. Has it an active social life? (Define 'social'). OPINION (Elaboration & enthusiasm 1-5 scale)

4. Why? / Why not? Can you account for this? OPINION (Degree of specificity 1-5 scale) (High score if school is featured positivel

5. Which village organization, facility or service contributes most to your own social life? OPINION (Elaboration & enthusiasm 1-5 scale) (High score if school association mentioned

6. Who, in your village, is the person who gets things done? (Confirm his/her role) OPINION (Elaboration & enthusiasm 1-5 scale) (High score if school personnel mentioned)

WITH SCHOOL

7. Does your school contribute to the social life of the village? OPINION (1-5 in terms of positiveness and elaboration)

8. Does your school now contribute more, or less, than in former times? OPINION (Elaboration & enthusiasm 1-5)

9. What single thing would you miss most if your school was closed? OPINION (Positiveness & elaboration 1-5)

10. As well as a school you have a shop/surgery/P.O./bus service/pub/ mobile library etc. Of all your amenities which 3 would you most miss, in order of priority? OPINION

WITHOUT SCHOOL

7. If there was a school here, would you expect it to add to the social life of the village? OPINION (1-5)

8. Did your school formerly contribute to the social life of the village when it was open? OPINION (1-5)

9. What single thing do you miss most by not having a school in the village? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5)

10. Although you do not have a school, you do have a shop/surgery....etc. Which 3 of these would you miss most in order of priority? OPINION

11. Which three village amenities that you haven't got would you most prefer? OPINION

12. The population of your village has declined/increased in the past few years. To what would you attribute this? OPINION (1-5 in terms of substantiation)

WITH SCHOOL	WITHOUT SCHOOL
13. Relating to 12, has the presence of a school had any bearing on this increase/decrease? OPINION (1-5 justification of opinion)	13. Relating to 12, has the absence of a school had nay bearing on this increase/decrease? OPINION (1-5)
14. Do you think children of all ages gain by having a school in the village? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5)	14. Do you think children of all ages lose-out by not having a school in the village? OPINION (1-5)
15. Why? Or why not? (Elaboration 1-5)	15. Why? Or why not?

16. Do you feel satisfied educationally with the First school which serves your village? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5)

.....

(f) How regularly do you visit the First school which serves your village? FACT

(g) When was the last occasion? FACT

(h) Can you name a manager of your First school? FACT

(i) PARENTS: Is your child a member of a club? Which? Has it connections with the First school? FACT

(j) PARENTS: How long is your child's chool day (from leaving home to returning)? FACT

(k) PARENTS: Are you satisfied with the length of your child's school day? FACT

.....

17. Is the presence/absence of a PTA important to you? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5 with high rating for positive PTA attitude)

18. Is the presence/absence of a pre-school playgroup in your village important to you? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5)

WITH SCHOOL	WITHOUT SCHOOL
19. Do you think parents of children aged under nine gain by having a school in the village? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5)	19. Do you think parents of children aged under nine lose-out by not having a school in the village? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5)
20. Do elderly people gain by having a school in the village? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5)	20. Do elderly people lose-out by not having a school in the village? OPINION (Elaboration 1-5)

THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE CLOSURE OF VILLAGE SCHOOLS IN NORTHUMBERLAND

INTERVIEW RESPONSE SHEET

VILLAGE WITH SCHOOL

Name: ----------

Address: ----------

Village: ----------

Date: ----------

Started: ----------

Completed ----------

(a) ----------

(b) ----------

(c) ----------

(d) ----------

(e) ----------

---

1. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

2. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

3. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

4. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

5. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

6. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

7. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

8. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

9. ---------- 5 4 3 2 1

10. (1) ---------- (2) ---------- (3)----------

INTERVIEW RESPONSE SHEET (2)

11. (1) ---------- (2) ---------- (3) ----------

12. ----------	5	4	3	2	1
13. ----------	5	4	3	2	1
14. ----------	5	4	3	2	1
15. ----------	5	4	3	2	1
16. ----------	5	4	3	2	1

(f) ----------

(g) ----------

(h) ----------

(i) ----------

(j) ----------

(k) ----------

---

17. ----------	5	4	3	2	1
18. ----------	5	4	3	2	1
19. ----------	5	4	3	2	1
20. ----------	5	4	3	2	1

BIBLIOGRAPHY - SEQUENTIAL

1. LASLETT, PETER. The World We Have Lost. London 1965. Chapters 1 & 2.

2. HOSKINS, W.G. The Rebuilding of Rural England 1570-1640 'Past & Present IV.' 1953. pp. 44 - 59

3. PINCHBECK, I., & HEWITT, M. Children in English Society from Tudor Times to the Eighteenth Century. London 1969. pp. 44 ff.

4. HOSKINS, W.G. Midland England. London 1949. p. 88

5. HUSSEY, A. (Ed.) Visitations of the Archdeaconry of Canterbury. Archaeologia Cantiana, XXV. 1902. p. 49

6. PURVIS, J.S. Tudor Parish Documents, York 1959. pp. 190, 193, 194

7. QUICK, R. H. (Ed.) Positions. London 1888. p. 139

8. CLARK, A. (Ed.) Aubrey's Brief Lines. Oxford 1898. Vol. 1. p. 328

9. DE BEER, E.S. (Ed.) The Diary of John Evelyn. Oxford 1955. Vol. 2 p. 6

10. JONES, M.G. The Charity School Movement. Cambridge. 1938. pp. 36 - 84

11. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education 1840-41: London 1841. pp. 446-7

12. LAWSON, J. & SILVER, H. A Social History of Education in England. London 1973. p. 227

13. Newbrough Parish Records. 1800-1852

14. Newbrough School Log Books. 1852-1982. Northumberland County Council Archives.

15. PETERSON, W. The Idealogical Origins of Britain's New Towns. American Institute of Planners Journal, XXXIV 1968. pp. 160 - 70

16. NISBET, R. The Sociological Tradition. London 1966. Chapter 3.

17. DURKHEIM, E. The Division of Labour in Society. New York 1964.

18. TONNIES, F. Gemeinschraft and Gesellschaft. Germany 1887.

22. PARSONS, T. and SHILS, E. Towards a General Theory of Action. New York. 1952. pp. 207-8.

23. HILLERY, G.A. (Jr.), Definitions ofCommunity: Areas of Agreement Rural Sociology, 20. 1955

26. SUSSMAN, M.B. (Ed.) Community Structure and Analysis. New York. 1959. pp. 1-2.

27. KAUFMAN, H.F. Towards an Interactional Conception of Community. Social Forces, 18. 1959.

29. SUTTON, W.A. and KOLAJA, J. The Concept of Community. Rural Sociology, 25. 1960

31. HILLERY, G.A. Communal Organizations. Chicago. 1969, p. 4

32. STACEY, M. The Myth of Community Studies. British Journal of Sociology, 20. 1969

39. ARENSBERG, J. and KIMBALL, A. Family and Community in Ireland. London. 1940.

40. MOGEY, J.M. Rural Life in Northern Ireland. London 1947.

41. REES, A.D. Life in a Welsh Countryside. Cardiff. 1950

42. DAVIES, E. and REES, A.D. Welsh Rural Commumities. Cardiff. 1960

43. WILLIAMS, W.M. The Sociology of an English Village. London 1956

44. WILLIAMS, W.M. A West Country Village: Ashworthy, London 1963

45. FRANKENBERG, R. Village on the Border. London 1957.

48. LITTLEJOHN, J. Westrigg: The Sociology of a Cheviot Parish. London. 1963.

50. PAHL, R.E. Urbs in Rupe. London 1964.

51. CRICKTON, R. Commuters' Village. London 1964.

52. POPPLESTONE, G. Planning for the Changing Countryside. London 1967.

53. FRANKENBERG, R. Communities in Britain. London 1966.

55. MACK, J.A. Community in Town and Countryside. Report of the Fifth British National Conference on Social Work. London. 1964.

56. PAHL, R.E. The Rural-Urban Continuum. Sociologia Ruralis, Vol. 6 Nos. 3 - 4. London 1966. p. 316.

57. WYLIE, L. Village in the Vanclose. Cambridge, Mass. 1961

59. McCOMBIE, F. (Ed). Educational Disadvantage and the North-East of England. Northumberland College of Higher Education. 1977.

60. PLOWDEN, Children in their Primary Schools. HMSO. 1967

61. D.E.S. Falling Numbers and School Closures. Circular 5/77. HMSO. 1977.

62. D.E.S. Circular 2/81. HMSO. 1981

63. BECKWITH, I. (Ed.) The Country Child. Centre for the Study of Rural Society, Incoln. 1973.

65. EMBLING, J.H. Schools and Educational Technology. London 1976

66. JONES, H. (Ed.) Education in Rural Areas. Centre for Information on Educational Disadvantage. Manchester. 1976.

67. ROGERS, R. Schools Under Threat. London. 1979.

68. GITTINS, Primary Education in Wales. HMSO. 1968.

69. ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY COUCNILS. Report on Education. London. 1979

70. EDMONDS, E.L. and BESSAI, F. Small Schools. London 1977.

71. BARKER, R. and GUMP, P.V. Big School, Small School. California 1964.

72. NASH, R. Schooling in Rural Societies. London 1980

74. THE TIMES, (Ed.) Village Schools Revalued. London. Sept. 1978.

77. SCHUMACHER, C. The End of An Era Calls for New Departures. Scott Bader Monograph. London 1977.

78. CLARK, L. The Decline of Rural Services. London 1978

79. LEE, T. Test of the Hypothesis that School Reorganisation is a Cause of Rural Depopulation. Durham. 1961.

80. PLOWDEN, Lady. Letter to the Times. London. August 1978

81. McCALL, G.J. and SIMMONS, J.L. (Eds.) Issues in Participant Observation. New York. 1969

82. BECKER, H. S. Sociological Work. New York. 1970

83. NASH. R. Classrooms Observed. London 1973.

85. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DEPT. Northumberland County Development Plan. NCC. 1959.

87. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DEPARTMENT. Northumberland County Development Plan. N.C.C. 1967

88. HOUSE, J.W. (Ed.) Rural North-East England. Newcastle 1965.

89. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DEPARTMENT. Northumberland County Structure Plan. N.C.C. 1976.

90. SUMNER, R. Letter to Newcastle Journal. April 1982.

91. SCOTT, J.H. The Death of the Village School. The Teacher. May 1978

92. ST. JOHN-STEVAS, N. Letter to the Times. August 1978.

93. CLARK, D. and SMITH, M. (Eds.) The Decline of Rural Services. Report by the Standing Conference of Rural Community Councils. 1978

94. THE TIMES. Editorial. September 1978

95. D'AETH, R. A Positive Approach to Rural Primary Schools. Cambridge. 1981.

96. MARKLUND, S. and BERGENDAL, G. Trends in Swedish Educational Policy. Stockholm. 1979

97. DANISH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. The Act on the Folkeskole. Copenhagen. 1976.

98. NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. Concerning the Basic School. Oslo. 1969.

101. ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT. Project on Sparsely Populated Areas. London 1979

102. UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM. The Social Effects of Rural Primary School Reorganisation. Birmingham 1981.

103. SCOTT, C. Research on Mail Surveys. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society 124. London 1961.

104. HOCHSTIM, J.R. A Critical Comparison of Three Strategies of Collecting Data from Households. Journal of the American Statistical Association 62. Washington 1967.

105. SELLTIZ, C., JAHODA, M., DEUTSCH, M., and COOK, S.W. Research Methods in Social Relations. New York. 1959

106. COOPER, B and BROWN, A.C. Psychiatric Practice in Great Britain and America: a comparative study. British Journal of Psychiatry 113. London 1967.

107. CLOKE, P.J. An Index of Rurality. Regional Studies. Vol. 11. Oxford. 1977.

109. WEBB, E.J., CAMPBELL, D.T., SCHWARTZ, R.D., and SECHREST, L. Unobtrusive Measures: Non Reactive Research in the Social Sciences. Chicago. 1973.

111. KENDALL, M.G. and SMITH, B. Tables of Random Sampling Numbers. Cambridge 1939.

112. THOMAS, W. J. and ZNANIECKI, F. The Polish Peasant in Europe and America. U.S.A. 1920.

113. MURPHY, G. and NEWCOMB, T.M. 'Experimental Social Psychology' London, 1937.

114. ALLPORT, A.W. 'Attitudes' in C. Murchison (Ed.) 'A Handbook of Social Psychology'. U.S.A. 1935.

115. SMITH, M.B. BRUNER, J.S. and WHITE, R.W. 'Opinions and Reasonability' U.S.A 1956

116. HEIDER, F. 'The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations'. U.S.A. 1958.

117. FESTINGER, L. 'A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance'. U.S.A. 1957.

118. BERRY, B.J.L. (Ed.) Urbanisation and Counterurbanisation. Urban Affairs Annual Review. New York. 1976.

119. MORRISON, P.A. and WHEELER, J.P. Rural Renaissance in America? Population Bulletin. Washington 1976.

120. CHAMPION, A.G. Population Trends in Rural Britain. HMSO. 1981.

122. KISH, L. A Procedure for Objective Respondent Selection Within the Household. Journal of the American Statistical Association. New York. 1949.

123. GRAY, P.G., CORLETT, T. and FRANKLAND, P. The Register of Electors as a Sampling Frame. Government Social Survey (M 60). London 1951.

124. MOSER, C.A. and KALTON, G. Survey Methods in Social Investigation. London 1971.

BIBLIOGRAPHY - ALPHABETICAL AND CATEGORISED

1. Books

ALLPORT, A.W. 'Attitudes' in C. Murchison (Ed.) 'A Handbook of Social Psychology'. U.S.A. 1935

ARENSBERG, J. and KIMBALL, A. Family and Community in Ireland. London 1940.

BARKER, R. and GUMP, P.V. Big School, Small School. California 1964

BECKER, H.S. Sociological Work. New York. 1970

CLARK, A. (Ed.) Aubrey's Brief Lines. Oxford 1898. Vol. 1. p. 328

CLARK, L. The Decline of Rural Services. London 1978

CRICKTON, R. Commuters' Village. London 1964.

DAVIES, E. and REES, A.D. Welsh Rural Communities. Cardiff. 1960

DE BEER, E.S. (Ed.) The Diary of John Evelyn. Oxford 1955. Vol. 2 p. 6

DURKHEIM, E. The Division of Labour in Society. New York 1964.

EDMONDS, E.L. and BESSAI, F. Small Schools. London 1977.

EMBLING, J. H. Schools and Educational Technology. London 1976.

FESTINGER, L. 'A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance'. U.S.A. 1957

FRANKENBERG, R. Village on the Border. London 1957.

FRANKENBERG, R. Communities in Britain. London 1966

HEIDER, F. 'The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations'. U.S.A. 1958.

HILLERY, G.A. (Jr.), Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement Rural Sociology, 20. 1955.

HILLERY, G.A. Communal Organizations. Chicago. 1969. p. 4

HOSKINS, W.G. The Rebuilding of Rural England 1570-1640 'Past & Present IV'. 1953. pp. 44 - 59.

HOSKINS, W.G. Midland England. London 1949. p. 88

HUSSEY, A. (Ed.) Visitations of the Archdeaconry of Canterbury. Archaeologia Cantiana, XXV. 1902. p. 49

JONES, M.G. The Charity School Movement. Cambridge. 1938. pp. 36 - 84.

KENDALL, M.G. and SMITH, B. Tables of Random Sampling Numbers. Cambridge 1939.

KAUFMAN, H.F. Towards an Interactional Conception of Community Social Forces, 18. 1959.

LASLETT, PETER. The World We Have Lost. London 1965. Chapters 1 & 2

LAWSON, J. & SILVER, H. A Social History of Education in England. London 1973. p. 227

LITTLEJOHN, J. Westrigg: The Sociology of a Cheviot Parish. London. 1963.

McCALL, G.J. and SIMMONS, J.L. (Eds.) Issues in Participant Observation. New York. 1969.

MOGEY, J.M. Rural Life in Northern Ireland. London 1947.

MURPHY, G. and NEWCOMB, T.M. 'Experimental Social Psychology' London, 1937.

NASH, R. Schooling in Rural Societies. London 1980

NASH, R. Classrooms Observed. London 1973.

NISBET, R. The Sociological Tradition. London 1966. Chapter 3.

PAHL, R.E. Urbs in Rupe. London 1964.

PARSONS, T. and SHILS, E. Towards a General Theory of Action. New York. 1952. pp. 207-8

PETERSON, W. The Idealogical Origins of Britain's New Towns. American Institute of Planners Journal, XXXIV 1968. pp. 160 - 70.

PINCHBECK, I., & HEWITT, M. Children in English Society from Tudor Times to the Eighteenth Century. London 1969. pp. 44 ff.

POPPLESTONE, G. Planning for the Changing Countryside. London 1967.

PURVIS, J.S. Tudor Parish Documents, York 1959. pp. 190, 193, 194

QUICK, R.H. (Ed.) Positions. London 1888. p. 139

REES, A.D. Life in a Welsh Countryside. Cardiff. 1950

ROGERS, R. Schools Under Threat. London. 1979

SELLITIZ, C., JAHODA, M., DEUTSCH, M., and COOK, S.W. Research Methods in Social Relations. New York. 1959

SMITH, M.B. BRUNER, J.S. and WHITE, R.W. 'Opinions and Reasonability' U.S.A. 1956

SUSSMAN, M.B. (Ed.) Community Structure and Analysis. New York. 1959. pp. 1-2

THOMAS, W.J. and ZNANIECKI, F. The Polish Peasant in Europe and America. U.S.A. 1920

TONNIES, F. Gemeinschraft and Gesellschaft. Germany 1887

WEBB, E.J., CAMPBELL, D.T., SCHWARTZ, R.D., and SECHREST, L. Unobtrusive Measures: Non Reactive Research in the Social Sciences. Chicago. 1973.

WILLIAMS, W.M. The Sociology of an English Village. London 1956

WILLIAMS, W.M. A West Country Village: Ashworthy, London 1963

WYLIE, L. Village in the Vanclose. Cambridge, Mass. 1961

2. Journals and Monographs

BERRY, B.J.L. (Ed.) Urbanisation and Counterurbanisation. Urban Affairs Annual Review. New York. 1976

CLOKE, P.J. An Index of Rurality. Regional Studies. Vol. 11. Oxford. 1977.

COOPER, B. and BROWN, A.C. Psychiatric Practice in Great Britain and America: a comparative study. British Journal of Psychiatry 113. London 1967.

HOCHSTIM, J.R. A Critical Comparison of Three Strategies of Collecting Data from Households. Journal of the American Statistical Association 62. Washington 1967.

KISH, L. A Procedure for Objective Respondent Selection Within the Household. Journal of the American Statistical Association. New York. 1949.

LEE, T. Test of the Hypothesis that School Reorganisation is a Cause of Rural Depopulation. Durham 1961.

MORRISON, P.A. and WHEELER, J.P. Rural Renaissance in America? Population Bulletin. Washington 1976.

PAHL, R.E. The Rural-Urban Continuum. Sociologia Ruralis, Vol. 6 Nos. 3 - 4. London 1966. p. 316.

SCHUMACHER, C. The End of An Era Calls for New Departures. Scott Bader Monograph. London 1977.

SCOTT, C. Research on Mail Surveys. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society 124. London 1961.

STACEY, M. The Myth of Community Studies. British Journal of Sociology, 20. 1969.

3. Reports, Circulars and Monographs

ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY COUNCILS. Report on Education. London 1979

BECKWITH, I. (Ed.) The Country Child. Centre for the Study of Rural Society, Lincoln. 1973

CHAMPION, A.G. Population Trends in Rural Britain. HMSO. 1981

Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education 1840-41. London 1841. pp. 446-7

D.E.S. Falling Numbers and School Closures. Circular 5/77. HMSO. 1977.

D.E.S. Circular 2/81. HMSO. 1981

GITTINS, Primary Education in Wales. HMSO. 1968.

GRAY, P.G., CORLETT, T. and FRANKLAND, P. The Register of Electors as a Sampling Frame. Government Social Survey (M 60). London 1951.

JONES, H. (Ed.) Education in Rural Areas. Centre for Information on Educational Disadvantage. Manchester. 1976

MACK, J.A. Community in Town and Countryside. Report of the Fifth British National Conference on Social Work. London. 1964.

McCOMBIE, F. (Ed.) Educational Disadvantage and the North-East of England. Northumberland College of Higher Education. 1977.

Newbrough Parish Records. 1800-1852

Newbrough School Log Books. 1852-1982. Northumberland County Council Archives.

NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. Concerning the Basic School Oslo. 1969.

ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT. Project on Sparsely Populated Areas. London 1979

PLOWDEN, B. Children in their Primary Schools. HMSO. 1967

UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM. The Social Effects of Rural Primary School Reorganisation. Birmingham 1981.

4. Newspaper References

THE TIMES, (Ed.) Village Schools Revalued. London. Sept. 1978.

PLOWDEN, Lady. Letter to the Times. London. August 1978